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**Ancient Songs and Ballads.**

VOL. I.

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# Ancient Songs

AND

## Ballads,

FROM

THE REIGN OF KING HENRY THE SECOND  
TO THE REVOLUTION.

COLLECTED BY

JOSEPH RITSON, ESQ.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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I love a ballad but even too well.

SHAKSPEARE.

---

LONDON:

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PRINTED FOR PAYNE AND FOSS, PALL-MALL;

BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

1829.

## ADVERTISEMENT

[TO THE FORMER EDITION.]

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THE favorable attention which the public has constantly shewn to works illustrating the history, the poetry, the language, the manners, or the amusements of their ancestors, and particularly to such as have professed to give any of the remains of their lyric compositions, has induced the editor to communicate a small but genuine collection of ANCIENT SONGS AND BALLADS, which his attachment to the subject had occasionally led him to form.

The reader must not expect to find, among the pieces here preserved, either the interesting fable, or the romantic wildness of a late elegant publication. But, in whatever light they may exhibit the lyric powers of our ancient Bards, they will at least have the recommendation of evident and indisputable authenticity: the sources from which they have been derived will be faithfully referred to, and are, in general, public and accessible.

The ESSAYS prefixed to the collection, and the NOTES with which it is accompanied, will be found to contain some little information, of which every one

## ADVERTISEMENT.

may not be already possessed, and which may serve to amuse, at least, if it fail to interest.

A GLOSSARY is subjoined, which the editor regrets his inability to render more perfect. Without other assistance, however, than what is to be scantily gleaned from a few printed books, he thinks he has a claim to the indulgence of the more critical reader ; and they who have laboured in the same field, he is persuaded, will be the most ready to afford it.

## ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

---

MORE than forty years have elapsed since the former impression of this singularly curious work\*, which excited unusual, though not unmerited, attention on its first appearance, and has been long out of print and difficult to procure.

The revised edition, now submitted to the candour of the public, is given, with fidelity and correctness, from a manuscript, *in the editors possession*, prepared, for the express purpose, by his able and industrious relative; and some of the various improvements rendering it less unworthy of approbation may, without impropriety, be noticed:—Important additions will be found in the *ESSAYS*; the words abbreviated in the manuscript authorities (with which the original transcripts have, for the most part, been carefully collated), are now printed at length; the Saxon characters are altogether rejected; the distinction or rather confusion,

\* It is dated in 1790, but was not published till two years after; though actually printed in 1787. The editor may be allowed to add that these volumes have been nearly four years in their progress through the press, as explaining an apparent anachronism in a note (i. 4.) intended to refer to Lord Eldon.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

of *u* and *v*, and *i* and *j*, has not been observed; and, to make the collection more complete and valuable, the editor has taken the liberty of adding to it such of the ANCIENT BALLADS inserted by Mr. Ritson in an earlier work\*, with his latest notes and corrections, as seemed best deserving of republication.

The plates of the vignette etchings, by Stothard, used in the former edition, were left in the hands of the printer, and have unfortunately been lost or destroyed.

*Stockton upon Tees,*  
*June 12, 1829.*

\* "A Select Collection of English Songs." 3 vols. 8vo. 1783.

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# OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

## ANCIENT ENGLISH MINSTRELS.

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I. THE Minstrels, by a learned, ingenious, and elegant writer, whom there will be frequent occasion to quote, are described to be “an order of men in the middle ages, who united the arts of poetry and music, and sung verses to the harp of their own composing ; who appear to have accompanied their songs with mimicry and action ; and to have practised such various means of diverting as were much admired in those rude times, and supplied the want of more refined entertainments ; whom these arts rendered extremely popular and acceptable, in this and all the neighbouring countries ; where no high scene of festivity was esteemed complete, that was not set off with the exercise of their talents ; and where, so long as the spirit of chivalry subsisted, they were protected and caressed, because their songs tended to do honour to the ruling passion of the times, and to encourage



and foment a martial spirit\*." This is certainly a fine, and possibly an unflattering description of a set of men, who unquestionably existed and flourished in France for several centuries, and whom several ingenious writers have contributed to render famous†. Numbers of these, no doubt, owing to the free intercourse between this country and the continent, so long as the English monarchs retained any of their Norman territories, were constantly flocking to their court and to the castles of their barons, where it may be easily believed they would experience the most favourable reception. They were still French, how-

\* Percy, "Essay on the Ancient English Minstrels" (prefixed to *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, third edition, 1775, vol. I.) p. xix. All the passages distinguished by double commas, to which there is no particular reference, will be found in this "Essay."

† Under this comprehensive term *minstrel*, the only name our language affords, we are to include the *trouveur*, or poet, the *chanteur*, or vocal performer, and the *menétrier*, or musician; not to mention the *fablier*, *conteur*, *joueur*, *baladin*, &c. all which were sometimes distinct professions, and sometimes united in one and the same man; which occasions great confusion in those who treat of them. M. le Grand makes the *menétrier*, a musician, and the *menestrel*, chief of the troop; a distinction, however, perfectly arbitrary. It did not appear necessary, and, indeed, was scarcely possible for the author of these observations to enter at large into the constituent character of the French minstrels: nor should he have added this note, if certain anonymous critics had not been pleased to pronounce him mistaken, which, they doubtless find a very easy method of confutation. The candid reader, who prefers facts to assertions, has only to consult the tale of "*Les deux menétriers*" in the *Fabliaux ou Contes*, ii. 313, and that this was likewise the case with the Provençal troubadours appears from several passages of their history. (See particularly, i. 378. ii. 31, 489. iii. 2, 356.)

ever ; and it is to be remembered that if this language were not the only, it was at least the usual one, spoken by the English monarchs and great men for several centuries after the conquest ; a fact which, if not notorious, must be evident to every person in any degree conversant with the history of those times. If, therefore, by "Ancient English Minstrels," we are to understand a body of our own countrymen who united the arts of poetry and music, and got their livelihood by singing verses to the harp of their own composing in their native tongue, who were well known to the Saxons, "continued a distinct order of men for many ages after the Norman conquest," and were hospitably and respectfully received at the houses of the great, all the facts, anecdotes and other circumstances which have been collected relative to the Provençal Troubadours or Norman Minstrels, however numerous or authentic, are totally foreign to the subject, and do not even prove the mere existence of the character supposed.

The incidents referred by the above learned writer to the times and manners of the Anglo-Saxons, though probably nothing more than the fictions of romance\*,

\* The stories of Alfred and Anlaff, (Essay, p. xxv.) are evidently the same with that of Colgrin (p. xxiv.) That the fables of Arthur were popular before Geoffrey of Monmouth published his *British History*, seems evident, both from Alfred of Beverley (*Annales*, p. 2.) and from Geoffrey himself, who says, the actions of Arthur, and the kings who lived here before the incarnation of Christ, were celebrated

do not seem to require examination ; since, allowing the facts themselves, they by no means affect the question proposed to be here considered, which is, Whether at any time, since the Norman Conquest, there has existed a distinct order of Englishmen, who united the arts of poetry and music, and got their livelihood by singing to the harp verses in their native tongue of their own composing? And if the elucidation of an obscure and interesting subject, or the attainment of just and distinct ideas of ancient characters and manners, be an object of any consequence, the discussion of this question will not be impertinent or useless.

It is admitted that no “very particular fact concerning the Minstrels” is to be met with till we come down to the reign of Richard the First ; “and under him their profession seems to have revived with additional splendour.” This monarch, “who was the great restorer and hero of chivalry, was also the distinguished patron of poets and minstrels : he was himself of their number, and some of his verses are still extant.” These verses, however, we find to be all in French, or Provençal ; but still “the distinction which Richard shewed to men of this profession, although his favours were chiefly heaped upon foreigners, could not but recommend the profession itself among his own sub-

by many people in a pleasant manner, and by heart, as if they had been written. These pleasantries were in all probability parts of some French romance, of which Geoffrey had got a prose translation.

jects ; and therefore we may conclude that English Minstrelsy would, in a peculiar manner, flourish in his time." It should however seem altogether as just and natural a conclusion from the premises, that since he cannot be discovered, in a single instance, to have shown his favours to any but foreigners, English Minstrelsy did not in his time flourish at all.

The adventure of this king and his Norman Minstrel, Blondel de Nesle, so elegantly dramatized by M. Sedaine\*, whatever honour it may be thought to confer upon poets or their art, certainly makes nothing in favour of the English Minstrels, whose existence is still left undecided.

The next memorable event which is found in history concerning the Minstrels, and is "much to their credit," was their rescuing one of the great earls of Chester, when besieged by the Welsh. This happened in the reign of king John†, and is related as follows:

"Hugh the first earl of Chester, in his charter of foundation of St. Werburg's abbey in that city, had granted such a privilege to those who should come to Chester fair, that they should not be then apprehended for theft or any other misdemeanor, except the crime

\* The authenticity of the anecdote is very dubious. It is related, indeed, in *Les croniques de Normendie, Rouen*, (c. 1520.) 4to. b. 1. but this seems a book in which there is at least as much romance as true history.

† "Vid. Dugdale; (Baronage, vol. 1. p. 42. 101.) who places it after the 13th year of K. Joh. Anno Dom. 1212.—See also Camden's *Britannia*, Plott's *Staffordsh. &c.*"

were committed during the fair. This special protection caused multitudes of loose and disorderly people to resort to that fair ; which afterwards proved of signal benefit to one of his successors. For Ranulph, the last earl of Chester [of that name], marching into Wales with a slender attendance, was constrained to retire to his castle of Rothelan, or Rhuydland ; in which he was straightly besieged by the Welsh. Finding himself hard pressed, he contrived to give notice of his danger to Lord Roger (or John) de Lacy, Constable of Chester, who, making use of the *Minstrels* then assembled at Chester fair ; these men, *like so many Tyrtæus's, by their music and their songs so allured and inspired* the multitudes of loose and lawless persons then brought together, that they resolutely marched against the Welsh : Hugh de Dutton, a gallant youth, who was steward to Lacy, putting himself at their head. The Welsh, alarmed at the approach of this rabble, supposing them to be a regular body of armed and disciplined veterans, instantly raised the siege and retired."

" For this good service, Ranulph granted to the Lacies, by charter, a peculiar patronage *over men of this sort* : who devolved the same again upon Dutton and his heirs. And the *Minstrels*, his assistants, enjoyed for many ages peculiar honours and privileges under the descendants of that family."

The above relation is, in the Essay, marked with double commas, *as a quotation*, but the only reference to any authority is that indirectly made in the note ;

and it is certain, that the writers there mentioned give little countenance to a remarkable passage, introduced, it should seem, by the learned essayist, to serve the purpose of a hypothesis, which, by this time, perhaps, he began to perceive would need more support than any author ancient or modern was ready to afford\*.

The story is thus told, by a writer who cannot be suspected of a design to render the actors less respectable than he found them represented.

“ This Randle†, among the many conflicts he had with the Welsh, . . . . was distressed by ‘ them,’ and forced to retreat to the castle of Rothelent, in Flintshire, about the reign of king John, where they besieged him: he presently sent to his constable of Cheshire, Roger Lacy, surnamed Hell, for his fierce spirit, that he would come with all speed, and bring what forces he could towards his relief. Roger, having gathered a tumultuous rout of *fidlers, players, coblers, [and other] debauched persons*, both men and women, out of the city of Chester (for ’twas then the fair-time in that city), marcheth immediately towards the earl. The Welsh, perceiving a great multitude coming, raised their siege and fled. The earl, coming back with his constable to Chester, gave him power

\* This passage (to which, by the way, there could be no possible objection, if it had not been within marks of quotation) is omitted in the new edition. Dr. Percys happiness of expression, or general elegance as a writer, was never disputed.

† The Third, surnamed Blundevil, sixth earl of Chester.

over all the *fiddlers* and *shoemakers* in Chester, in reward and memory of this service. The constable retained to himself the authority and donation of the *shoemakers*, but conferred the authority of the *fiddlers* and *players* on his steward, which then was Dutton\*.”

The words of the grant to Dutton are, “*Magisterium*

\* Sir Peter Leycesters *Historical Antiquities*, p. 141. See also Blounts *Ancient Tenures*, p. 156.—Sir W. Dugdale only tells us, that the earl in his distress “sent to the constable of Chester for help; who, making use of the *Minstrels of all sorts*, then met at Chester fair, by the allurements of their *music*, got together a vast number of such loose people, as by reason of the before specified privilege, were then in that city, whom he forthwith sent under the conduct of Dutton (his steward) towards Rothelan.” *Baronage*, i. 101. He refers to the History of Cambria, by D. Powel, p. 296. And, though he allows this might have been done as was reported in the time of Roger, constable of Chester, says, it is most certain that it was John, his son, who had the patronage of *that rabble* given him by the earl, and thereupon granted the same to Hugh de Dutton.

The words of Camden are, that “this family [of Dutton], by an old custom, hath a particular authority over all *pipers*, *fiddlers*, and *harpers* of this county, ever since one R. Dutton, with a rabble of such men, rescued Ranulf, the last earl of Chester, &c.” *Britannia*, in *Cheshire*. His authority is a “*Chronicon Walliæ*,” by which he doubtless means Powells history, where the story seems to have originally appeared. All that this writer says is, that “Ralph [r. Hugh] Dutton, ‘Lacys’ son-in-law, being a lustie youth, assembled together all the *plaiers*, *musicians*, and *merie companions* in the citie (being then the fair time) and came to the constable, who forthwith went to Ruthlan, raised the siege, and delivered the earle from danger. In recompence of which service, the earle gave unto his constable divers freedoms and privileges, and granted unto the said Dutton, the ruling and ordering of all the *plaiers* and *musicians* within that countie, which his heire enjoyeth even unto this day.” *Hist. of Cambria*, 1584, p. 296.

*omnium LECCATORUM et MERETRICIUM totius Cestreshire, sicut liberius illum magisterium teneo de comite; salvo jure meo mihi et heredibus meis\*.*" No mention is made of Fiddlers or Minstrels; we must therefore presume them to have passed as an appendage or appurtenance to the whores and letchers, for whose diversion this respectable order of men, "who united the arts of poetry and music, and sung verses to the harp of their own composing," were most miserably twanging and scraping in the booths of Chester fair.

True it is, that in the 14th year of king Henry VII., Laurence Dutton, lord of Dutton (in answer to a *quo warranto*, on behalf of prince Arthur, as earl of Chester) claimed that all Minstrels inhabiting, or exercising their office, within the county and city of Chester, ought to appear before him, or his steward, at Chester, at the feast of St. John Baptist yearly, and should give him at the said feast four flagons of wine, and one

\* Dug. Baro. i. 101. Sir P. Leycesters *Historical antiquities*, pp. 142. 251. This author supposes "the rout which the constable brought to the rescuing of the earl were *debauched persons* drinking with their sweethearts in the fair, *fiddlers*, &c." ("*pipers* and other sorts of minstrels" says King). And observes, that "the custom seems to have been altered to the *fiddlers*, as *necessary attendants* on revellers in *bawdy-houses* and *taverns*." Dr. Percy, however, in the new edition, says, "the natural inference is, that the minstrels were expressed by the term *Leccatores*" (which, it appears from Ducange's glossary, may mean *buffoons*); and mentions an ancient MS. in French metre (quoted by that author) "wherein the *LECCOUR* (*Lat. Leccator*) and the *MINSTREL* are joined together:" a sufficient proof that the names were not synonymous; though the persons meant were doubtless "*par nobile fratrum*."



lance ; and also every Minstrel should pay him four pence halfpenny, at the said feast &c. ; for which he pleaded prescription\*.

It is likewise admitted, that the Duttons were wont to keep a court every year upon the above feast, being the fair-day, where all the Minstrels of the county and city did attend and play before the lord of Dutton, or his steward, upon their several instruments, to and from divine service ; after which, the old licences granted to the Minstrels were renewed, and such new ones granted as he thought fit, none presuming to exercise that faculty without licence† ; and that this privilege has been excepted in many acts of parliament, whereby Minstrels have been declared, and directed to be punished as rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars.

In the reign of Edward I., it seems, a MULTITUDE OF MINSTRELS are expressly mentioned to have given their attendance in his court, at the solemn act of knighting his son. This is sufficiently credible, but will by no means prove them to have been Englishmen.

The woman whom Stow relates to have entered into Westminster Hall, adorned like a *minstrel*, sitting on a great horse trapped as *minstrels* then used, who rode

\* Sir P. Leycesters *Historical antiquities*, p. 142. 251. Blounts *Ancient Tenures*.—*Law Dictionary*, v. Minstrel.

† At this court the steward, having called every minstrel, and impaneled a jury, charged them to enquire, whether any man of that profession had “ exercised *his instrument* without license from the lord of the court,” or what misdemeanour he was guilty of. *Kings Vale royal of England*, p. 29.

round about the tables, *shewing pastime*, and at length came up to the king and delivered a letter, had evidently assumed the character of a tumbler or *tumblestere*\*, the profession, we find, of females, in the time of Chaucer. Stow might translate the word *histrion* by *Minstrel* properly enough, without meaning one who sung to the harp; for he undoubtedly knew, both that the word had no such implication, and that women never sung to the harp †.

In the fourth year of Richard II. John of Gaunt ordained a king of the Minstrels (*Roy des Ministraulx*)

\* This word is derived by Mr. Tyrwhitt from the Saxon *tumban*, to dance; but, in the *Romant of the Rose*, at least, it is clearly a corruption of *tumbestere* or *timbestere*, a female performer on the *timbre*; *tomberesse*, *tumberesse*, *tymberesse*, and *timberesse*; *tombe*, *tumbe*, *tymbre*, and *timbre*, all occurring in different MSS. of the original. In the other instances, however, Mr. Tyrwhitt's derivation may be still right: as *tumblestere* is the legitimate feminine of *tumbler*.

† *i. e.* professionally and in public. Dr. Percy has, indeed, produced a few instances, from old romances (to which more might be added), of ladies playing on the harp; and many such instances may be found at this day; though it would appear very odd to term the fair performers *she-minstrels*. "These instances," therefore, "are [NOT] sufficient."

If *Tumbestere* did not, as would seem from the above note, mean a tumbler or dancing-woman, the historian could not "have used the word *saltatrix*." The following passage, however, in the ancient *Roman de Perceval* appears to put the existence of female dancers and tumblers out of all doubt:

"Harper y faisoit harpeors,  
Et vieler vieleors,  
Et les baleresses baler,  
Et LES TUMBERESSES TUMBER."

within his honor of Tutbury in Staffordshire, to whom he gave power to take and arrest all the Minstrels within that honor who should refuse to make their services and minstralcie, &c. In virtue of this grant, a court of Minstrels used to be kept, where defaulters were amerced, offenders presented, and other proceedings had, till the latter end of the last century. Now the Minstrels, to whom a sovereign was thus given, could have been only the retainers to the castle and honor of Tutbury, or, in other words, the dukes band of music; and this monarch perhaps was a sort of *maestro di capella*. Dr. Plot, who was present at one of the minstrel-courts, has left us a pretty full account of the whole ceremony; but in his time, the Essay allows, the Minstrels “appear to have lost their singing talents, and to have become mere musicians.” As to *singing talents*, it is most likely they never possessed any\*; and what sort of *musicians* they were, may be in some measure conceived from a part of the ceremony which the Essayist has judiciously omitted. After the court was over, the steward to the duke of Devonshire, as representative of the prior of Tutbury, used to deliver a bull, prepared for the occasion, and turn him loose among the Minstrels; and, if they succeeded in their endeavours to take him before he got over the

\* Both the Essayist and the present writer turn out to be mistaken: one of the articles of enquiry given in charge to the inquest was, Whether any of the several minstrels within the honor had “abused or disparaged their *honorable profession*, by drunkenness, profane cursing and swearing, *singing lewd or obscene songs*, &c.”

Dove, he was brought to the stake, and baited for their further diversion. The whole of this infamous business was attended with circumstances of the most shocking and brutal barbarity, which it would be disgusting to repeat, and which a fidler or ballad-singer of the present times (low as the profession may be now sunk) would scorn to countenance\*.

Such was the famous *bull-running of Tutbury*, or *court of minstrels*; of which one of that profession thus speaks, in the assumed character of the *roy des ministraultx*, long before Dr. Plots time :

“ This battle was fought near to Titbury town,  
 When the bagpipes baited the bull;  
 I'm *king of the fiddlers*, and swear 'tis a truth,  
 And I call him that doubts it a gull.  
 For I saw them fighting, and *fiddled* the while, &c.†”

“ Even so late as the reign of Henry VIII.” it is observed, “ a stated number of Minstrels were retained in all great and noble families, as appears from the establishment of the household of the then earl of Northumberland.”

“ Item, MYNSTRALES in houshold iij. viz. a *taberet*, a *luyte*, and a *rebecc*‡.” But this surely cannot be pro-

\* See Plots *Staffordshire*, p. 435. and Blounts *Ancient Tenures*, p. 167. The minstrels court, bull-running, &c. were entirely abolished by the duke of Devonshire in 1778, at the request of the inhabitants of Tutbury, owing to the outrages usually committed on the occasion. See the new edition of *Blounts Tenures*, by Beckwith, p. 313.

† *Robin Hoods Garland*, Song I.

‡ Essay, p. lxxiv. In the celebration of Christmas, Sir J. Hawkins says, *fiddlers* were deemed so necessary, that in the houses of the

duced to prove, that these "Mynstrals" were an order of men "who united the arts of poetry and music, and sung verses to the harp of their own composing." However this may be, "the Minstrels," we are told, "continued down to the reign of Elizabeth; in whose time they had lost much of their dignity, and were sinking into contempt and neglect." As to dignity, it is pretty clear they never had any to lose; and if we find them treated with contempt and neglect, it is because we are now become better acquainted with them, and do not view them through the medium of Ducange or Fontenelle.

"Still," however, "they sustained a character far superior to any thing we can conceive at present of the singers of old ballads;" or rather of the *players on fiddles*; for we have hitherto only found them to be musicians; not a song has a single one of them been yet proved to have sung.

A passage, quoted by the Essayist (p. xxxv.), from a writer of this period, gives us, it must be confessed, a distinct idea of the character he describes; but it is evidently of a character that existed only in the imagination of those who contrived the "ridiculous devise" of this "Auncient Minstrell and his song," and

nobility, they were retained by small stipends, as also cloaks and badges, with the cognizance or arms of the family, like certain other domestic servants. From the houses of great men, to wakes, fairs, and other assemblies of the common people, the transition of these vagrant artists was natural. *Hist. Music*, iv. 382.

who had met with him in *Morte Arthur*\*. If Minstrels had been common, a REAL one would have been procured, and not "one personating that character."

"Towards the end of the sixteenth century, this

\* See Langhams *Letter*, &c.—That a Minstrel or singing harper is a very useful personage in the above ancient and popular romance, will appear from the following anecdote. Sir Lancelot being in a violent passion, on account of a threatening abusive letter which king Marke of Cornewaile had sent to queen Guenever, wherein he "spake shame by her, and by sir Lancelot;" sir Dinadan, to comfort him, bids him "set right nought by all these threatenings, for king Marke 'was' so vilanous, that by faire speach 'should' never no man get ought of him; but (continues he) yee shall see what I shall doe, I will make a lay for him, and when it is made, I shall make an harper to sing it before him. So anon hee went and made it, and taught it an harper, that hyght Elyot, and when hee could it, hee taught it to many harpers. And so . . . the harpers went straight unto Wales and Cornewaile to sing the lay, . . . which was the worst lay that ever harper sung with harpe, or with any other instrument. And [at] the great feast that king Marke made for joy of the victorie which hee had, because the Sessoines were put out of his countrey, came Eliot the harper; . . . and because he was a curious harper, men heard him sing the same lay that sir Dinadan had made, the which spake the most vilanie by king Marke, of his treason, that ever man heard. When the harper had sung his song to the end, king Marke was wonderous wroth with him, and said, Thou harper, how durst thou be so bold on thy head to sing this song before me? Sir, said Eliot, wit you well I am a MINSTRELL, and I must doe as I am commanded of these lords that I beare the armes of. And, sir king, wit you well that sir Dinadan, a knight of the round table, made this song, and he made me to sing it before you. Thou saiest well, said king Marke, I charge thee that thou hie thee fast out of my sight. So the harper departed, &c. But for to say that king Marke was wonderous wroth, he was." Part II. c. 113. (Ed. 1634.) See also part III. c. 5. (This extract is copied with very little alteration into the new edition of the *Reliques*.) The title of one of the chapters in the old French romance of *Merlin* (Rouen. s. d.) is,

class of men had lost all credit, and were sunk so low in the public opinion, that, in the 39th year of Elizabeth, a statute was passed, by which "Minstrels wandering abroad," were included among "rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars," and were adjudged to be punished as such. This act seems to have put an end to the profession, for after this time they are no longer mentioned."

Of the language of this statute, the Minstrels should not seem to have had much reason to complain, as *vagabond* was a title to which the profession had been long accustomed\*.

"Come Merlin se mist en forme de ung beau jeune hōe aveugle : et jouyt de une harpe, &c." which is worth perusing. (*Tome II. fo. cix.*)

\* Item. pur eschuir plusieurs diseases et meschiefs qont advenuz devant ces heures en la terre de Gales, par plusieurs westours, rymours, *ministrals*, et *autres vacabondes*, ordeignez est, &c." Stat. 4 H. IV. c. 27.

The author of *the Vision of Pierce Plowman* treats them with as little respect :

"As comen as a cartwaye to eche a KNAVE that walketh,  
To monkes, and to MINSTRELS, to mesels in hedges."

It might not be long after the passing of the above act against the Minstrels, that dr. Bull wrote satyrical verses upon them (extant in some MS. of the Harleian collection, of which the number cannot be recovered), part of the first stanza being as follows :

When Jesus went to Jairus house,  
[Whose daughter was about to die,]  
He turn'd the Minstrels out of doors,  
Among the rascal company :  
BEGGARS they are, with one consent,  
And ROGUES, by act of parliament.

II. It is somewhat remarkable, that we have yet seen no authority which should induce us to think, that there ever was a single Englishman, who “ united the arts of poetry and music, and sung verses to the harp of his own composing ;” nor in fact is any such authority to be found. If those writers who have become the historians or panegyrists of the Provençal troubadours, or the French Minstrels, had been possessed of no better evidence than we are, the mere existence of such a body would not have been at present known. The *tensons*, the *sirventes*, the *pastourelles* of the former, the *lais*, *contes*, and *fabliaux* of the latter are innumerable, and not only prove their existence, but afford sufficient materials for their description and history. But this is by no means the case with the “ Ancient English Minstrels,” of whom it is not pretended that we have any thing more than a few rude ballads, which prove nothing less than their origin. Not a single piece is extant in which an English Minstrel speaks of himself ; whereas, the importance or vanity of the French Minstrel for ever leads him to introduce himself or his profession, and to boast of his feats and his talents. That there did exist in this country an order of men called Minstrels, is certain ; but then it is equally clear, that the word was never used by any English writer, for “ one who united the arts of poetry and music, and sung verses to the harp of his own composing,” before the ingenious writer so often quoted ; but, on the contrary, that it



ever implied an instrumental performer, and generally a fidler, or such like base musician.

To begin with the glossarists: Florio, in his *World of wordes*, 1598, renders the Italian words *Biffaro* and *Ghigaro*, “a fidler, a crouder, a minstrell.” Sir Henry Spelman explains the word “Minstrell,” by “*fidicen, tibicen*,” Blount, by “a musician, a fidler;” Cotgrave translates *menestraudier*, “a minstrell or fidler;” and Minshew says, that “Minstrel,” is in German, “*ein fidler*.”

The “Minstrells” of the kings household, in the time of Edward III. were “trompeters, cytelers, pypers, tabrete, mabrrers, clarions, fedeler[s], wayghtes\*.”

An old chronicler, speaking of the battle of Halidon-Hill, in this reign, observes, that “the Englissh *mystral* blewe hir *trumpes* and hir *pipes* [or, as a different copy has it, “beten her *tabers*, and blowen her *trompes*”], and hidously astrede the Scottis†.”

The “Minstrels” of king Edward IV. were musicians, “whereof some ‘were’ *trompets*, some with the *shalmes* and *smalle. pypes*, and some strange mene coming to ‘the’ court at fyve feastes of the year, and then take their wages, . . . after iiij. d. ob. by daye, &c. ‡”

\* Hawkins’s *Hist. Music*, ii. 107.—*Wayghtes* were players on hautboys or other pipes during the night; as they are in many places at this day. See 291.

† MS. Harl. 266. (4690.) These *minstralis* were the drummers and *ffifers* of the present day.

‡ Hawkins’s *Hist. Music*, ii. 290.

In a narrative of "the departure of the princess Katherine out of Spaine, together with her arrival and reception in England" 1501, printed in the new edition of Lelands *Collectanea* (v. 352.) we read that "she and her ladyes called for their *minstrells* and . . . solaced themselves with the disports of *dauncing*."

Those of the earl of Northumberland, in the time of king Henry VIII. we have already seen, were "a tabret, a luyte, a rebecc." And in a list of the household musicians of king Edward VI. we find "trumpeters, luters, *harpers*, *singers*, rebeck, sagbutts, vyalls, bagpiper, MINSTRELLES, dromslades, and players on the flutes and virginals\*." The particular office of the Minstrels does not indeed appear; but it must be evident, that they were not *singers to the harp*.

Dr. Percy had not observed that *gleman* or *gleweman* is frequently used for *minstrel* in the *Vision of Pierce the Plowman*, (1550.):

"And sithen to speach, that enspyred is of grace,  
And gods *gleman*, and a game of heaven,  
Woulde never that faythfull father hys *fjyde* were untemperd,  
Ne his *gleman* a gadling, a goer to taverne." (fol. 43, b.)

He appears, from this author, to have been occasionally blind, and led by a dog:

"And than gan he to go, like a *glewemans bytch*,  
Sometyme asyde, and sometyme arere." (fo. 26.)

Skelton, laureat, treats the character with the utmost contempt†.

\* Hawkins's *Hist. Music*, iii. 479. Florio explains the word *Taburrino*, by "a little drum, a tabour, a timbrell, a *drum-slade*."

† Against a comely coystrowne, &c. *Works*, p. 256.

It should seem, by the way, that the minstrels of this æra had a dress to distinguish their profession. The company, described by the author whose words are quoted, being seated in a tavern, "in comes a *noise of musicians*, in tawney coats, who taking off their caps, asked if they would have any *MUSIC*? The widow answered, No; they were merry enough. Tut, said the old man, let us hear, good fellows, what you can do; and play me, *The beginning of the world* \*."

Again, in the "Pretie and mery new enterlude, called the Disobedient Child," the young woman, speaking of her approaching nuptials, says,

"There wolde this daye be very good cheare,  
That every one his bealy maye fyll,

\* *History of Jack of Newbury*, by Tho. Delony. The times referred to, are those of king Henry VIII. The widow being importuned to drink to such one of the company as she loved best, says, "with this cup of claret and sugar, I heartily drink to the MINSTRELS BOY."

A *noise of musicians*, was a company of them. In the *second part of King Henry IV.* Act II. Scene IV. one of the drawers bids his fellow see if he can find out "*Sneak's noise*;" Mrs. Tearsheet being desirous to have some *music*.

Now, with respect to these *tawney coats*; it is well known that this was the livery of the bishop of Winchester, within whose manor of Southwark, and under whose license and authority the public stews anciently flourished. May we not, therefore, conclude that the minstrels thus described were retainers in ordinary to those privileged retreats of licentious mirth? In one of the prints of Hogarths *Rakes Progress*, he has introduced a venerable *minstrel*, accompanying on his harp the melodious strains of a pregnant female: the scene of action being *The Rose tavern*, where these respectable characters were wont to ply.

And thre or foure *Minstrelles* wolde be here,  
That none in the house syt idle or stylee."

*sci.* for dancing. *Wolde* in both places means *should*.

In the old morality of *Lusty Juventus*, written and printed in the time of king Edward VI. *Youth* says,

"Who knoweth where is a *mynstrell*?  
By the masse, I would fayne go *daunce a fittle*."

Again:

"Well i-met father, well i-met;  
Dyd you here anye *mynstrels playe*?"

"*Good Councel*. What would you with the *minstrell* do?  
*Juventus*. Nothing, but *have a daunce* or two."

The mystery of *Candlemas day*, composed 1512, concludes with the following lines, part of the poets address to his audience:

"Wherefor now, ye *vyrgynes*, or we go hens,  
With all your company you goodly avaunce:  
Also ye *menstralles* doth your diligens,  
Afore our deperture geve us a daunce."

That is, in modern English, *Fidlers, strike up!*

Thus too, in an ancient poetical tract, entitled the *Taming of a Shrew; or the Wife lapped in Morels Skin*, 4to. (sig. c. i.)

"The *mynstrelles* played at every borde."

Again, in *Grenes Orlando furioso*, 1594:—

"I'll be his *minstrell* with my *drum* and *fife*,  
Bid him come forth, and *dance it*, if he dare."

Again, in *Lilys Mother Bombic*, 1594:—

" I have been a *minstrell* these thirte yeaeres,  
And tickled more strings than thou hast haïres."

Spenser, in his *Epithalamion*, gives a very accurate description of them :

" Hark how the *Minstrils* gin to shrill aloud  
Their merry musick that resounds from far,  
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling crowd,  
That well agree withouten breach or jar.  
But most of all the *danzels* doe delight,  
When they their *tymbrels* smite,  
And therein doe dance and caroll sweet,  
That all the senses they doe ravish quite \*."

\* Thus too, Chaucer in the *Romance of the Rose* :

" There was many a *timbretere*,  
And salpours, that I dare wel swere  
Couth her craft ful perfectly :  
The *tymbres* up ful subtilly  
They cast, and hente ful ofte  
Upon a fynger fayre and softe, &c."

These timbres are the *tambour de basque*, an instrument of the greatest antiquity. Following the above extract, in the former edition is a quotation on the credit of sir John Hawkins's *History of Music*, from "the pleasant history of Thomas of Reading," concerning one Rahere, who "was a great musician and kept a company of MINSTRELS, i. e. FIDLERS, who played with silver bows." Unless, however, there be very great difference in the editions of this "famous history," it does not contain the word "minstrels;" at least in the passage where mention is made of Rejor (not Rehère) and "his servants." Sir John is certainly an inaccurate, and would seem from this instance to be an unfaithful citer. Stow, indeed, speaks of this Rahere as "a pleasant witted gentleman, and therefore in his time called the kinges minstrell." *Survey of London*, 1598. p. 308.

Shakespeare calls them "*feast-fading minstrels*," in his *Rape of Lucrece*, (as the author of *Pierce Plowman* had called them long be-

In *Follie's Anatomie*, by H. Hutton, *Dunelmensis*, 1618, 8vo. is an epigram, which begins,

"Shouldring a *Minstrell* in a lane, I broke  
His *violls case*."

In the *Taming of a Shrew*, a person having described a wedding, says,

"Hush, hark ! I hear the *minstrels play*."

In Groves *Epigrams*, &c. 1587 [we find]

"The *minstrel* then that *fiddleth* fine  
At *feeding times* may play,  
And *sing* to heape into his purse  
The *coyne* by night or day."

Lastly, by an ordinance of the Commonwealth, in 1656, c. 21. It was enacted, "that if any person or persons, commonly called *fiddlers* or *minstrels*, shall at

fore) "not to fare as a *fidler* or a friar to *seke festes*," p. 48, and in his comedy of *Much Ado about Nothing*, makes Claudio say, "I will bid thee *draw*, as we do the *minstrels* ; draw to pleasure us." Indeed the word appears to have been considered as reproachful and insulting even by the profession itself. Peter in *Romeo and Juliet* tells the *musicians* he "will give them no money, but the gleeke," "I will give you the *minstrel*:" then says the first musician, "will I give you the serving-creature."

Ben Jonson, in his *Tale of a tub*, introduces "Old father Rosin, chief *minstrel* of Highgate, and his two boys:" they are *fiddlers* ; and play the tunes called for by the company : as *Tom Tiler*, *The jolly joiner*, and *The jovial tinker*. The same author, in his "Masque of the metamorphosed gypsies," calls a bag-piper, "the miracle of *minstrels* ;" and, in another part makes one of his characters say, "The king has his noise of gypsies, as well as of *beards* and other *minstrels*."

any time be taken *playing, fiddling, and making musick*, in any *Inn, Alehouse, or Tavern*, or shall be taken proffering themselves, or desiring, or intreating any person or persons to hear them play or make musick, in any the places aforesaid, every such person or persons, so taken, shall be adjudged, and are hereby adjudged and declared to be rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggers."

After this, the word *Minstrel* was scarcely ever mentioned (unless in dictionaries or vagrant acts) till it appeared with such *éclat* in the Essay prefixed to the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.

III. That there were individuals formerly, who made it their business to wander up and down the country chanting romances, and singing songs and ballads to the harp, fiddle, or other more humble and less artificial instrument, cannot be doubted. These men were in all probability comprehended within the general term of Minstrels, but are by no means to be exclusively distinguished by that title; and indeed were generally denominated from the particular instruments on which they performed. It may be easily imagined, that many of these people, though entirely destitute of education, and probably unable either to write or read, possessed the talent of inventing historical or legendary songs, which would sometimes have merit; but it is to be observed, that all the minstrel-songs which have found their way to us are merely narrative; nothing of passion, sentiment, or even description, being to be discovered among them.

Men equally ignorant, have in all ages and in all countries, been possessed of the same talent, and such a character is only rare at present, because it is become more difficult to please. It is however worthy of remark, that no English Minstrel was ever famous for his composition or his performance; nor is the name of a single one preserved: and it has been seen, that we only commence our acquaintance with these Minstrel-songsters, when "they had lost all credit, and were sinking into contempt and neglect." It will be readily conceived, that in rude and barbarous times, men who contributed to the general amusement of the common people, were held in much greater estimation than they are at present; and that two or three centuries ago, the wooden wit of old England was a much more welcome visitant in many a populous city, than even a Garrick or a Siddons would be in the present age. The art of printing was fatal to the Minstrels who sung; people begun to read, and, unfortunately for the Minstrels, their compositions would not bear reading; of course not above two or three of them ever got to the press: the songs used by the ballad-singers, on the contrary, were smooth and regular, were all printed, and, what was much more to their advantage, were generally united to a simple but pleasing melody, which was easily acquired, and any one could sing; whereas the Minstrels songs were without tune, and could not be performed, even by themselves, without the twang of a harp, or the scrape of a fiddle. These two (not to speak of the



cultivation of poetry and music by persons of genius and learning) seem to have been the principal causes of the rapid decline of the Minstrel profession, since the time of queen Elizabeth, though it is conceived that a few individuals resembling the character might have been lately, and may possibly be still found in some of the least polished or less frequented parts of the kingdom. It is not long since that the public papers announced the death of a person of this description somewhere in Derbyshire; and another, from the county of Gloucester, was within these few years to be seen in the streets of London; he played on an instrument of the rudest construction, which he, properly enough, called a *hum-strum*, and chaunted (amongst others) the old ballad of *Lord Thomas and fair Eleanor*, which, by the way, has every appearance of being originally a Minstrel song\*. It is not improbable that a Minstrel being so rare a character at this day, is in a great measure owing to the puritanical innovations of the last and latter part of the preceding century, and particularly to the abolition of sports or public amusements on sunday afternoons, which a

\* He appeared again in January 1790; and called upon the present writer in the April following. He was between 60 and 70 years of age, but had not been brought up to the profession of a minstrel; nor possessed any great store of songs, of which that mentioned in the text seemed the principal. Having, it would seem, survived his minstrel-talents, and

“Forgot his epic, nay pindaric art,”

he has been of late frequently observed begging in the streets.

spirit of Calvinistical bigotry still teaches groveling minds to think repugnant to religion.

Dr. Percy, though he admits, that, as the Minstrels art “declined, some of them only recited the compositions of others,” says, that “many of them still composed songs, and all of them could probably invent a few stanzas upon occasion.” He has no doubt but most of the old heroic ballads, printed in his own collection, “were composed by this order of men.” In another place he says, that “the artless productions of these old rhapsodists, are [in his work] occasionally confronted with specimens of the composition of contemporary poets of a higher class: of those who had all the advantages of learning in the times in which they lived, and who wrote for fame and posterity. Yet perhaps the palm will be frequently due to the old strolling Minstrels, who composed their rhimes to be sung to their harps, and who looked no farther than for present applause and present subsistence.”

The ballads which Dr. Percy is inclined to refer to the Minstrels, are those in which a reader will observe “a cast of style and measure very different from that of contemporary poets of a higher class; many phrases and idioms, which the Minstrels seem to have appropriated to themselves, and a very remarkable licence of varying the accent of words at pleasure, in order to humour the flow of the verse, particularly in the rhimes; as

<i>Countrie</i>	<i>harpèr</i> <sup>v</sup>	<i>battèl</i>	<i>mornìng</i>
<i>Ladie</i>	<i>singèr</i>	<i>damsèl</i>	<i>lovìng</i>

instead of *country, lady, harper, singer, &c.*—This liberty seems, however, to have been “sparingly assumed by the classical poets of the same age;” and “the ‘later’ composers of heroical ballads.” The old minstrel ballads are likewise “in the northern dialect\*, abound with antique words and phrases, are extremely incorrect, and run into the utmost licence of metre; they have also a romantic wildness, and are in the true spirit of chivalry.” It is also observed, “that so long as the Minstrels subsisted, they seem never to have designed their rhimes for literary publication, and probably never committed them to writing themselves: what copies are preserved of them were doubtless taken down from their own mouths.”

This being the case, it ought not to have been a matter of wonder if not a single specimen of these minstrel rhimes had descended to us. It is rather a subject of astonishment, that we should be possessed of such a number. Dr. Percy had the good fortune to meet with “an ancient folio manuscript, which contains near 200 poems, songs, and metrical romances. The MS. itself was written about the middle of the last century, but contains compositions of all times and dates, from the ages prior to Chaucer, to the conclusion of the reign of Charles I:” And from this MS. the greater part of the contents of the above collection, particularly the minstrel ballads, are extracted.

\* Not all of them.

The above MS. is certainly the most singular thing of the kind that was ever known to exist. How such a multifarious collection could possibly have been formed so late as the year 1650, of compositions from the ages prior to Chaucer, most of which had never been printed, is scarcely to be conceived by those conversant in ancient MSS.; a similar instance perhaps not being to be found in any library public or private. The existence of this MS., if ever questioned, is now placed beyond the possibility of a doubt. But it appears to have suffered much by ill usage:

“*Sir Cauline*” (vol. i. p. 41.) was “in so *defective* and *mutilated* a condition, that it *was necessary* to supply *several stanzas* in the *first* part, and *still more* in the *second*, to connect and complete the story.” “*The Child of Elle*” (i. 109.) is “given from a fragment,” which, “*tho’ extremely defective and mutilated,*” “*excited a strong desire to attempt a completion of the story.*”

“*Sir Aldingar*” (ii. 50.) is not given without “a few conjectural emendations, and the insertion of three or four stanzas to supply defects in the original copy.”

In the ballad beginning “Gentle herdsman” (ii. 79.) “vestiges of several of the lines remaining, some conjectural supplements have been attempted, which, for greater exactness, are, in this one ballad, distinguished by *italicks*.” This is a measure to which there can be no other objection, than that it is confined to “this one ballad,” which however has not the least appear-

ance of being a minstrel song. "*As ye came from the Holy Land*" (iii. 93.) is communicated by Mr. Shennstone, "as corrected by him from an ancient MS. and supplied with a concluding stanza."

In "*the heir of Linne*" (ii. 128.) "breaches and defects rendered the insertion of a few supplemental stanzas necessary," which "it is hoped the reader will pardon," though he is not instructed how to distinguish them.

In "*The beggars daughter of Bethnal-Green*" (ii. 162.) "the concluding stanzas" are acknowledged to be an interpolation; and in the prefatory introduction is a communication by Mr. Guthrie, of "the only stanza he remembered" of another old song on the same subject.

"*The marriage of Sir Gawaine*" (iii. 11.) was "so extremely mutilated, half of every leaf being torn away, that without large supplements, &c. it would have been improper for the collection." "They are not however particularly pointed out, because the fragment itself will some time or other be given to the public\*."

\* The word *thewes* is repeatedly used by Spenser and other ancient writers, always in the sense of manners, behaviour, or the qualifications of the mind. Shakspeare, as Mr. Stevens has justly observed, is singular in his application of it to the perfections of the body. Yet, in *The marriage of Sir Gawaine*, we read

"He's twice the size of common men,  
Wi' *thewes* and sinewes stronge."

“ *King Arthur’s death*” (iii. 28.) “ being very incorrect and imperfect, . . . received some conjectural emendations, and even a supplement of three or four stanzas.”

“ It cannot be denied, but that a great part of ‘ *The Birth of St. George,*’ is modern,” (iii. 219). It may be safely denied, however, that the least part of it is ancient.

As to “ *Valentine and Orson,*” (iii. 280.) “ it would be in vain to put off this ballad for ancient, nor yet is it altogether modern. The original is an old MS. poem in the Editors possession, [not indeed in the folio MS.]; which being in a wretched and corrupt state, the subject was thought worthy of some embellishments.”

Many other instances might be noticed, where the learned collector has preferred his ingenuity to his fidelity, without the least intimation to the reader.

It follows, from the manner in which this celebrated collection is avowedly published, that no confidence can be placed in any of the “ old Minstrel ballads ” inserted in that collection, and not to be found elsewhere.

There are however some pieces of which we are otherwise in possession, and which, according to the

This passage therefore, though quoted in support of Shakspeare, is to be regarded as one of the editors “ large supplements,” and affords a (perhaps singular) proof of his inattention to ancient language.

“ (N. B. The above note, written before the publication of the new edition, is confirmed by the original fragment.) ”

rules laid down by Dr. Percy, may be supposed to have been originally written for and sung to the harp. Such are the following (being all of this kind known to exist):

- 1 The battle of Chevy-chase.
2. The battle of Otterbourne.
3. Little Musgrave and lady Barnard.
- 4 Lord Thomas and fair Eleanor.
5. Fair Margaret and sweet William.
6. John Dory.
7. John Armstrong.
8. Captain Car.

The first was originally printed by Mr. Hearne, at the end of his edition of William of Newborough, and reprinted by Dr. Percy (i. 1.). Of the second, two MS. copies are extant, one in the Harleian and the other in the Cotton library; from the latter of which it is printed in the third edition of the *Reliques*. The third is printed in Drydens Miscellany (iii. 307.). A circumstance attending this ballad will make it evident, that the Minstrel songs were thought improper for the press. The old black letter copies are very different, and have been modernised and polished for publication. Dr. Percy professes to have given the song in his collection from an old printed copy in the British Museum, and observes, that "in the Pepys collection is an imitation of 'it' in a different measure, by a more modern pen, with many alterations, but evidently for the worse." It is however no less certain than remarkable, that the old printed copy in the Museum

differs in no respect from the imitation in the Pepysian library.

The fourth is one of the two or three ballads of this kind known to be printed in black letter, and yet it has not been thought sufficiently smooth for recitation or melody, since there is a *rifacimento* of it extant, but of the most contemptible nature.

*John Dory* is a well known minstrel song, and was never printed in black letter, nor at all (till of late) except in the book whence it is taken. Both the fifth and the seventh are also to appearance minstrel songs, and were printed in black letter. The eighth is extant in a MS. of the Cotton library.

These songs, from their wild and licentious metre, were incapable of any certain melody or air\*; they were chanted, in a monotonous stile, to the harp or other instrument, and both themselves and the performers banished by the introduction of ballad-singers without instruments, who sung printed pieces to fine and simple melodies, possibly of their own invention, most of which are known and admired at this day†. The latter, owing to the smoothness of their language,

\* It is to this peculiarity that Puttenham alludes, when he says "Your ordinarie rimers use very much their measures in the odde, as nine and eleven, and the sharpe accent upon the last sillable, which therefore makes him go ill-favouredly and like a MINSTRELS MUSICKE." See the Essay (new edition) p. cv.

† Hence we perceive one reason why the ballad-singers were under the necessity of having most of the old minstrel ballads they adopted new written; another might be, that the originals were too short.



and accuracy of their measure and rime, were thought to be more poetical than the old harp or instrument songs; and though critics may judge otherwise, the people at large were to decide, and did decide: and in some respects, at least, not without justice, as will be evident from a comparison of the following specimens.

The first is from the old *Chevy-Chase*, a very popular minstrel-ballad in the time of queen Elizabeth:

“ The Persé owt of Northombarlande,  
And a vowe to god mayd he,  
That he wolde hunte in the mountayns  
Off Chyviat within dayes thre,  
In the mauger of doughté Dogles,  
And all that ever with him be.

The fattiste hartes in all Cheviat  
He sayd he wold kill, and cary them away:  
Be my feth, sayd the dougheti Doglas agayn,  
I wyll let that hontyng yf that I may.”

How was it possible that this barbarous language, miserably chanted “ by some BLIND CROWDER, with no rougher voice than rude stile\*,” should maintain its ground against such lines as the following, sung to a beautiful melody, which we know belongs to them?

“ When as king Henry rul’d the land,  
The second of that name,  
Besides the queen he dearly lov’d  
A fair and comely dame:

\* Sir P. Sidney, *Defence of Poetry*.

Most peerless was her beauty found,  
Her favour and her face ;  
A sweeter creature in the world  
Did never prince embrace.

Her crisped locks like threads of gold  
Appear'd to each man's sight,  
Her sparkling eyes, like orient pearls,  
Did cast a heav'nly light :

The blood within her christal cheeks  
Did such a colour drive,  
As if the lily and the rose  
For mastership did strive \* . ”

The minstrels would seem to have gained little by such a contest. In short, they gave up the old Chevy-chase to the ballad-singers, who, desirous, no doubt, to avail themselves of so popular a subject, had it new written, and sung it to the favourite melody just mentioned. The original, of course, became utterly neglected and forgotten, and, but for its accidental discovery by Hearne, would never have been known to exist.

*John Dory* was the constant companion of the minstrels ; he stuck by them to the last, and may be said indeed to have died in the service. Let us see what sort of a figure he would cut in company with *Queen Dido*.

“ As it fell on a holy day,  
And upon a holy tide a,  
John Dory bought him an ambling nag,  
To Paris for to ride a . ”

\* *Fair Rosamond*.

“ When Troy town had, for ten years ‘ past,’  
 Withstood the Greeks in manful wise,  
 Then did their foes increase so fast,  
 That to resist nought could suffice :  
 Waste lye those walls which were so good,  
 And corn now grows where Troy town stood. ”

One comparison more, and we have done :

“ Methinks I hear the throistle cock,  
 Methinks I hear the jay,  
 Methinks I hear lord Barnards horn ;  
 And I would I were away.

Lye still, lye still, thou little Musgrave,  
 And huggle me from the cold ;  
 ’Tis nothing but a shepherds boy,  
 A driving his sheep to the fold \*.”

“ These pretty babes, with hand in hand,  
 Went wandering up and down ;  
 But never more could see the man,  
 Returning from the town :

Their pretty lips with blackberries  
 Were all besmear’d and dy’d ;  
 And when they saw the darksome night,  
 They sate them down and cry’d †.”

These stanzas, exclusive of their superior smoothness, may defy all the minstrel-songs extant, nay even those in the *Reliques of ancient English poetry*, for simplicity, nature, interest, and pathos, to which it must be confessed these celebrated rhapsodies have very small pretensions.

\* *Little Musgrave and lady Barnard.*

† *Children in the wood.*

Of the Scottish minstrels few particulars can be now recovered. In an act of parliament, made *anno* 1457-8, *bairdes* are ranked with *sornares*, *maister-full beggers*, and *feinzied fuiles* (not *gypsies* as Pinkerton has it, for that is not only an impudent interpolation but a ridiculous anachronism). “But, in 1474 [r. 1471],” says this writer, “*minstrels* are ranked with *knights* and *heralds*, and such as could spend 100 pounds a year land-rent, and are allowed to wear silk apparel.” (*Ancient Scottish poems*, 1786, p. lxxviii.) The provision of the statute is “That, considering the greate povertie of the realme, . . . na man sall weare silkes in time cumming, in doublet, gowne, or cloakes, except knichtes, *minstrelles*, and *herauldes*: without that the wearer of the samin may spend ane hundreth pundes worth of land rent, under the paine of amerciament to the king of twentie pound, als oft as they ar found in wearin silkes, and escheitting of the same, to be given to the *herauldes* and *minstrelles*.” These two characters should seem to have been excepted not only on account of their party-coloured dress, but also because they were not themselves at the expence of it. The *minstrelles* here meant, I am persuaded, were trumpeters or such like musicians in the kings service; and by no means persons who got their livelihood by contributing to the amusements of the common people, and are, doubtless, the *bairdes* of the preceding statute.

After all, the minstrel songs, under the circumstances in which they were produced, are certainly

both curious and valuable compositions, and could any further lights be thrown upon the history of those by or for whom they were invented, a collection of all that can be discovered would still be a very entertaining and interesting work ; but if such a publication should ever appear, it is to be hoped that it will come from an editor who prefers truth to hypothesis, and the genuine remains of the minstrel-poets, however mutilated or rude, to the indulgence of his own poetical vein, however fluent or refined.

DISSERTATION  
ON THE  
SONGS, MUSIC, AND VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL  
PERFORMANCE,  
OF THE  
ANCIENT ENGLISH.

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I. To pretend to frame a History, or any thing resembling one, from the scanty gleanings it is possible to collect upon the subject of our ancient songs and vulgar music, would be vain and ridiculous. To bring under one view the little fragments and slight notices which casually offer themselves in the course of extensive reading, and sometimes where they are least likely to occur, may possibly serve to gratify a sympathetic curiosity, which is all here aimed at; and when so little is professed, there can scarcely be reason to complain of disappointment.

The trifling information that can be obtained upon the songs and music of the Anglo-Saxons has been already collected\*, and is unnecessary to be here

\* See Percys Essay on the Ancient English Minstrels, p. xxiii. &c. and a Historical Essay on National Song, prefixed to "*A Select Collection of English Songs*," published in 1783, p. xlii.

repeated. The present enquiry therefore must be supposed to commence from the Norman Conquest, although the first ‘English rime’ to be met with in it does not occur till long after. This is a couple of lines preserved by old Lambarde, which, with the anecdote they relate to, the reader may not be displeased to see. If he be, indeed, it is apprehended there will be very little in this Essay capable of attracting his attention, or preserving his good humour.

“ In tyme of Hen. II. [*anno* 1173] Robert therl of Leycester (after the spoile of his towne of Leicester) came from beyond the seas with a rabble of Fleminges and Normanes, whom he made to beleve that al was theirs before hand, and as he was on his way, he purposed to spoile ‘the’ town and thabbey [of St. Edmundes Burye]; but bycause he might come upon them the more unwares, he swarved a litel out of the waye, as thoughe he ment not to come neare them. Now while his gallantes paused upon the heathe, they fell to daunce and singe,

“ Hoppe Wylykin, hoppe Wylykin,  
Ingland is thyne and myne, &c.”

In the meane tyme the kinges army came sodenly upon them, and eyther slew, drowned, or toke them all\*.” For this story mr. Lambarde refers us to Matthew Paris; but where he found the song, or whether he had any more of it, is not mentioned.

Mr. Camden has noticed another rime of the same

\* *Dictionary of England*, p. 36.

age, not strictly a song, perhaps, but deserving, nevertheless, to be brought forward upon the present occasion. Having observed that the river Waveney runs to Bungey in Suffolk, and almost encompasses it, "Here," says he, "Hugh Bigod [earl of Norfolk] when the seditious barons put all England in an uproar, fortify'd a castle, to the strength whereof nature very much contributed. Of which he was wont to boast, as if it were impregnable :

" Were I in my castle of Bungey,  
Upon the river of Waveney,  
I would ne care for the king of Cockeney."

Notwithstanding which, he was afterwards forc'd to compound with a great sum of money and hostages with Henry the second, to save it from being demolisht\*." These two rimes, supposing them to be given upon good authority, are valuable, independent of other considerations, as the earliest specimens of the English language, not being pure Saxon†.

It should seem, from a rather extraordinary passage

\* *Britannia* (by Gibson, 1695, p. 375). It is sufficient for any editor to quote such authorities as Lambarde and Camden; but it is certain, from contemporary remains, that these extracts (particularly the latter) cannot possibly be the idiom of the 12th century.

† The riming charter printed by Stow (*Annales*, 1592. p. 141) is a forgery. Higgons, speaking of the massacre of the Danes, by order of K. Ethelred, 1002, says, "This happen'd upon St. Brice's eve, which is still celebrated by the *northern English*, in commemoration of this infamous action, the women beating *brass instruments* in the streets, and *singing old rhimes* in praise of their cruel ancestors." *Short View of English History*.



of Giraldus Cambrensis, that songs and vocal harmony were very common about this period. His words are these:

“ They [the Welsh] sing without uniformity of musical modulation, as elsewhere, but multifariously, and in many modes and tunes, so that in a croud of singers, as is the manner of this people, as many heads as you see, so many songs you hear and different voices, all finally under B soft, with a charming sweetness, agreeing in one harmony and organic melody. In the northern parts also of Great Britain, beyond the Humber, and in the borders of Yorkshire, the English, who inhabit those parts, use in singing a similar symphonic harmony: but only in two different or various tones and voices; the one murmuring the lower, the other at the same time in a soft and pleasing manner warbling the upper. Nor is it by art only but by ancient use, and as if now converted into nature by constant habit, that this or that people hath acquired this peculiarity. For it so far hath grown up, and such deep root hath now taken among each, that nothing is wont to be uttered simply, or otherwise than variously as among the first, or doubly as among the latter: boys also (which is the more to be wondered at) and even infants (when first from cries they break forth into songs) observing the same modulation. The English, I believe, for not generally all, but the northern people only, use this sort of modulation of voices, from the Danes and Norwegians who used to occupy those parts of the island more frequently, and continue in

the possession of them longer, as they contracted the affinity of speaking, so also the property of singing \*.” The not being able to understand or account for such a singularity, seems an insufficient reason for disbelieving the relation: it is no unusual thing however for this author, ancient as he is, and right-reverend as he was, to have his veracity questioned.

From the reign of Henry II. to that of his successor of the same name, is a long leap; but we meet with nothing to stay us. Of the latter reign, besides the song before printed in the following collection, we have a very curious historical ballad, a satire upon Richard king of the Romans †: another of the same age we cannot with certainty refer to.

From that most valuable manuscript in the Harleian library, whence the above satire is extracted, we are supplied with several songs of the two following reigns; and history, sufficiently sparing of such favours, condescends to furnish us with a vulgar relique or two belonging to the first of them.

The battle of Dunbar was fought and won by the earl of Warenne, the 28th of April 1296; “and tho seide the Englishshmen in reprefe of the Scottis:

Thus scaterand Scottis,  
Holde I for sootis,  
Of wrenchis unware;

\* *Cambriæ descriptio*, c. xiii. See also Hawkins's *History of Music*, i. 408. Dr. Burney found similar effects produced by the church-service in Flanders and Germany. See his *Present state of music* in those countries, volume i. pp. 9, 201, 226.

† See Percys *Reliques*, ii. 1. and *infra*, p. 12.

Eerly in a mornynge,  
 In an evyl tyding,  
 Went ye froo Dunbarre."

The wits on the other side had indeed, it should seem, commenced this kind of hostilities, which it were to be wished had been the only one that ever prevailed between the two nations. "King Edward," says our authority, "went him toward Berwyke, and biseged the toune and tho that were withyn manlich hem defended, and sett on fire and brent ij of the king Edwarde shippes, and seide in dispite and reprefe of him :

"Wend kyng Edewarde with his lange shankes,  
 To have gete Berwyke al our unthankes?  
 Gas pikes hym, and after gas dikes hym."

Their pleasantry, however, was, in the present instance, somewhat ill-timed, for as soon as the king heard of it, he assaulted the town with such vigour, that he carried it with the loss of 25,700 Scots. This happened on the thirtieth of March in the same year\*.

\* Old Chronicle MSS. Harl. 226. 7333., much the same to all appearance with that printed by Caxton. See also P. Langtoft. pp. 272. 278. The number seems prodigiously exaggerated.

Robert Mannyng (or of Brunne) the ingenious translator of P. Langtofts riming chronicle has preserved another song on the above battle. For thus he writes in what he calls rime *couwe* :

"The Scottis had no grace, to spede in ther space, for to mend ther nisse,

Thei filed ther face, that died in that place, the Inglis rymed this.  
 Oure fote folk put tham in the polk, and-nakned ther nages,  
 Bi no way herd I never say of prester pages,  
 Purses to pike, robis to rike, and in dike tham schonne,  
 Thou wiffin Scotte of Abrethin, kotte is thi honne." p. 277.

Songs on national topics were at this time generally written in French, 'many' of which, and 'several' of them very curious, are still in being\*.

The venerable father of English poetry had in his time penned "many a song and many a lecherous lay," of which we have infinitely more reason to regret the loss, than he had in his old-age to repent the composition†. His larger works, and above all the inimitable *Canterbury Tales*, afford us numerous particulars relative to the state of vocal melody in that age. The *gentil Pardonere*,

"That streit was comen from the court of Romé,  
Ful loude he sang, Come hither, lové, to me.  
The Sompnour bear to him a stiff burdoun,  
Was never trompe of half so gret a soun ‡."

This *burdoun* must have been the base, and would somewhat resemble, in all likelihood, the drone of a bagpipe; which, it should be remembered, the word actually signifies in its original language.

\* See MS. Harl. 2253. [from which two specimens are now printed.]

† Gower, his contemporary and friend, bears testimony to the lyric effusions of his juvenile muse:

"Grete wel Chaucer, whan ye mete,  
As my disciple and my poete;  
For in the flours of his youth,  
In sondrie wise, as he wel couth,  
Of *detees* and of *songes glade*,  
The which he for my sake made."

‡ *Miller's Tale*. (Note, that all the quotations here made from the *Canterbury Tales*, are from the valuable edition of the late Mr. Tyrwhitt.)

Alison, the carpenters wife, had a great many accomplishments:

“But of hire song, it was as loud and yerne,  
As any swallow sitting on a berne\*.”

And the Wife of Bath, in her younger days, as she herself tells us, could sing like a nightingale.

The songs of Robin Hood, a hero of an earlier period, were so popular in this age, that a satirical writer of the time represents a secular priest as having neglected his breviary to acquire them:

“I can rimes of Robin Hood and Randal of Chester,  
But of our lord and our lady I lerne nothing at all†.”

This Randal of Chester was Randal Blundeville, the third and last earl of that name, a generous, martial baron, and a crusader, who died in 1231; and not Randal Higden, the monk and chronicler, as Mr. Warton strangely imagines‡.

The author, whoever he was, of the additions to Chaucers *Canterbury Tales*, has in his Prologue of “the mery adventure of the pardonere and tapstere,” preserved the name of what was probably at that period (the end of the 14th century) a popular song:

\* *Miller's Tale*.

† *Vision of* (i. e. concerning) *Piers the Plowman*; supposed to be written by Robert Langland, a priest, about the year 1360.

‡ *Hist. Eng. Poetry*, ii. 179.

“ And sighed there with a litil time that she it here myghte,  
And gan to rown and feyn this song, *Now love then do me righte*\*.”

The common people, no doubt, have in all ages been fond of singing in the alehouse†: Thus, for the age of which we are now speaking, the author of *Piers Plowman*:

“ And then saten some and songe at the nale.”

And the author of the *Plowmans Tale* (not Chaucer, to whom it has been erroneously ascribed) reprehends the priests for the ambition of being

“ Chief chantours at the nale‡.”

The songs made use of by these wassailers§ would

\* Urrys Chaucer, p. 594.

† They have been equally addicted to quarreling there, from the remotest period. See *LL. Inæ*, c. 6. *LL. Æthelredi*, c. 1. *LL. Hen. I.* c. 81.

‡ Part 3, stan. 22, v. 2. Thus too a song of Henry the sixths time: MS. Harl. 4294.

“ And thou goo to the nale  
As mery as a nyghtyngale.”

§ *Washeil* and *Drincheil* were the terms of art of the old toppers at the nale, who used to make the welkin resound with them. “The old ale-knights of England,” says Camden, “were well depainted out of ‘John <sup>u</sup>Harvill, a monk of S. Albans,’ in the ale-house colours of that time, in this manner;

*Jamque vagante scypho, discincto\* gutture washeil*  
*Ingeminant washeil; labor est plus perdere vini*

\* Other copies have *distento*: but *distincto gutture* seems the true reading, and answers to the French, *Gorge deployé*.

not, it is presumed, be remarkable for delicacy or ele-

*Quam sitis; exhaurire merum vehementius ardent,  
Quam exhaurire sitim.*

Remaines, 4to. 1605. *Poems*, p. 6.

Sir T. de la Moor, about to describe the battle of Bannockburn, has the following words: "*Vidisses prima nocte Anglos haud Anglico more vino madentes, crapulam eructantes, Wassaille & Drinkehaile plus solito intonantes.*" Vita Edwardi-II. The Saxons, according to Fordun, spent the night preceding the battle of Hastings in the same manner: "*Illam noctem Angli totam in cantibus et potibus insomnem duxerunt.*" c. 13.

For the latter fact, indeed, we have a better authority in *maistre Wace's* Life of the conqueror:

"*Mult les veissiez demener  
Treper et saillir et chanter,  
Lublie [f. luplice] crient et weisseil,  
Et laticome et drincheil,  
Drinchindrewart, et drincome  
Drinc helf et drincome.*"

Some of these words are obscure and others corrupt; but the sense seems to be this:

Much you should see them demean [themselves]  
Trip and dance and sing,  
Gladly [do] they cry, and *washell*  
And *Let 'em come* [or *let it come*] and *drinkheil*,  
*Drink hitherward* and *drink to me*,  
*Drink health*, and *drink to me*.

Old Robert of Gloucester likewise has a similar observation.

"The Englysse al the nyght byvore vaste bygon to synge,  
And spende al the nyght in glotony and in dryngynge."

It is almost needless to observe, that these two are the very first Saxon words which we know, from historical evidence, to have been

gance ; but, whatever they were, it might afford some little satisfaction to be acquainted with them\*.

pronounced in this country. Vortigern, K. of Britain, being invited to supper by his ally Hengist, at his newly built castle of Sydingbourn in Kent, was, after supper, approached by Hengists beautiful daughter Rowena, who, having a goblet of wine in her hand, and making a graceful reverence, said, *pæs heil hlaforð cýning*, *i. e.* be of health, lord king ; to which the king, being instructed by his interpreter, replied, *ðunc heil*, *i. e.* drink health. The bait had its effect ; the king, smitten with the young ladys charms, desired and obtained her in marriage, divorcing his wife, and giving up the whole of Kent to Hengist.

\* Will the reader pardon the insertion of the only specimen that has occurred, and of which, as dr. Johnson has somewhere observed, “ the merriment is very gross, and the sentiments very worthless ?” to which mr. Andrews adds in the words of Thomas Hearne, “ It is trifling, and little is to be gathered from it, yet it is a curiosity.”

“ Bryng us home good ale, sir, bryng us home good ale ;  
And, for our der lady love, brynge us home good ale.

Brynge home no beff, sir, for that ys full of bonys,  
But brynge home good ale inowgh, for I love wyle that.  
But, &c.

Brynge us home no wetyn brede, for that ys full of braund,  
Nothyr no ry brede, for that ys of that same.  
But, &c.

Brynge us home no porke, sir, for that ys very fat,  
Nethyr no barly brede, for nethyr lovys I that.  
But bryng us home good ale.

Bryng us home no mutton, sir, for that ys togh and lene,  
Nethyr no trypps, for they be seldyn clene.  
But bryng, &c.

Bryng us home no vele, sir, for that will not dur,  
But bryng us home good ale inogh to drynke by the fyr.  
But, &c.



II. With respect to the music of this distant period, we are still more at a loss, than we are as to its songs. It was probably nothing more than the plain chant, or “a succession of sounds of the same name and place in the scale; viz. *C sol fa ut*, being the mean part of a tenor voice,” with little or no pretension to melody, the graces of the air being altogether arbitrary, and depending entirely upon the skill or powers of the performer. Certain it is, that no secular music of these times, such as may be supposed to have been in vogue among the common people, is known to be preserved. Dr. Burney confesses that he had not been so fortunate as to meet with a single tune to an English song or dance, in all the libraries and manuscripts he had consulted, so ancient as the *fourteenth* century\*. Sir John Hawkins had already made a similar observation†; and the only doubt which these gentlemen leave upon the minds of their readers is, whether they have met with one so ancient as the *fifteenth*. One may go still further; it is perhaps impossible to produce even the bare name of a song or dance-tune in use before the year 1500. The oldest country-dance-tune now extant, sir John Hawkins says, is

Bryng us home no sydyr, nor no palde wyne,  
 For and thou do thow shalt have Crysts curse and myne.  
 But, &c.”

It is of or about the time of Henry VI. and is given from *MS. Harl. 541*.

\* *Hist. of Music*, ii. 381.

† *Hist. of Music*, ii. 91.

that known by the name of Sellengers, *i. e.* St. Legers Round, which may be traced back to *nearly* the time of Henry VIII\*. It is nevertheless highly probable, that some little light tunes for dances were known from very early times. The *hornpipe* is thought by musicians to be the native production of this country, but, if so, it was, possibly, invented as well as used by those who could not read a note†.

\* *Hist. of Music*, ii. 91. The proof cited, however, does not carry it much nearer than the year 1591.

† Chaucer, in his *Romant of the Rose*, speaks of "hornpipes of Cornewaile," as a musical instrument; to this the rural dances so called were perhaps originally performed, and owe a denomination for which it will otherwise be very difficult to account. In a MS. of ancient songs and music found among the books of the kings library in the Museum, and now deposited among the royal MSS. not later than Hen. the VIIIth's time, is "a hornepype;" but the authority of a gentleman, every way qualified to be a competent judge, enables the editor to say, that it bears no resemblance to the hornpipe of modern times, being a very long and solemn composition.

In Nicholas Bretons *Woorkes of a young wit*, 1577, are preserved the names of two ancient tunes:

"But let them be such as they were, by chaunce,  
Our banquet doone, we had our musicke by:  
And then you knowe the youth must needes goe daunce,  
First galiards, then larous, and heidegy,  
Old lusty gallant, All floures of the broome,  
And then a hall, for dauncers must have roome."

*A hall! a hall!* was the ordinary cry on such occasions. So in Shakspeares *Romeo and Juliet*:

"A hall! a hall! give room, and foot it, girls."

The following are noticed in Stephen Gossons "Schoole of abuse," 1579: *Rogero*, *Turkelony*, *The shaking of the sheets*, and *The trenchmour*.

Sir John Hawkins has, indeed, pronounced that "songs and ballads, with easy tunes adapted to them, *must* at all times have been the entertainment not only of the common people, but of the better sort;" and that "these *must* have been of various kinds, as namely satirical, humorous, moral, and not a few of them of the amorous kind. *Hardly any* of these," he adds, "with the music of them, are at this day to be met with, and *those few* that are *yet extant* are only to be found in *odd part books*, written *without bars*, and *with ligatures*, in a character *so obsolete*, that all hopes of *recovering them*, or of rendering, to any tolerable degree intelligible, any of the *common popular tunes* in use before the *middle* of the *sixteenth century*, must be given up\*." It is not to be presumed that the learned writer is, in this very curious passage, describing what he never saw, much less what does not exist; it is therefore much to be regretted, that he did not consult some persons (and undoubtedly there are many) to whom the *want of bars*, the use of *ligatures*, and a character *so obsolete*, would have proved no impediment. But what "common popular tunes" have to do in "odd part books," is not easy to conceive.

A manuscript in the possession of the editor of the following collection, and written, partly at least, in the times of Richard II. and Henry IV. contains, perhaps, the oldest specimens of vulgar music that can be produced; and, as it is rather a curiosity, a few extracts

\* *Hist. Music*, iii. 2.

may not be thought improper\*. A total ignorance of the musical art is not the only inconvenience under which the present writer labours; what he thus inserts is, therefore, to be regarded as mere matter of antiquity: He leaves *bars* to be added, *ligatures* to be untied, and *obsolete characters* to be decyphered, by those whose genius and studies have qualified them for the task; thinking it enough for him to have afforded matter for the exercise of their ingenuity.

\* On the inside of the cover is the following note by "honest Tom Martin of Palgrave;" "This book is the hand-writing of the famous John Brakley, frier minor of Norwich, tutor and master to judge Paston, whose accounts these are, when he was at the inns of court at London;

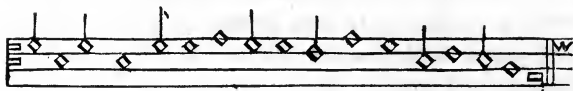
*Obijt Willūs Paston, Justiciarius Regis, Ao. 1418, Lra Dñicalis D.*

The songs are very curious."

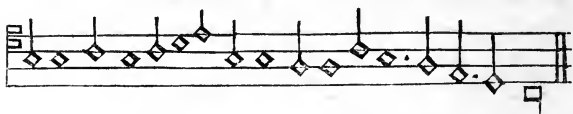
Mr. Martin was reckoned a skilful antiquary and an ingenious man; but he has committed at least one considerable mistake in this account, as judge Paston, who was born in 1378, did not die before 1444: and that frier Brakley was his tutor is, at least, highly improbable; since he is spoken of in 1469, as recently dead; when even his supposed pupil would have been 91. See *Original Letters, during the reigns of Henry VI., &c.* iv. 330.

The manuscript has been since presented to the British Museum.

These two seem fragments of Love Songs:

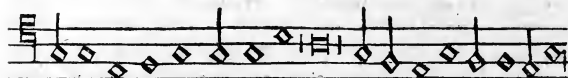


I have loved so many a day, lightly spedde bot better I may

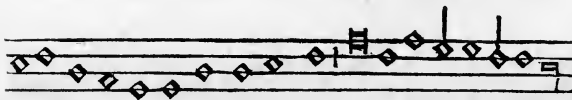


This ender day wen me was wo under a bugh, ther I lay.  
Naght gale to mene me to

Here is a picture of the *Virgin Mother* rocking her cradle:



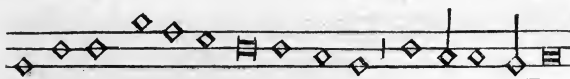
I saw a swete semly syght a blisful birde  
A maydin moder mek & myld in credil kep



a blossom bright that murnyng made and mirgh of mange  
a knave child that softly slepe scho sat and sange

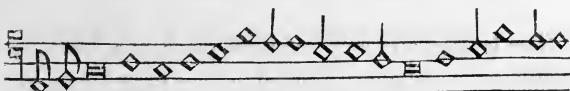


I saw a swete semly sight a blossom bright a blis-  
A maydin moder mek and mild in cradil kepe a knave

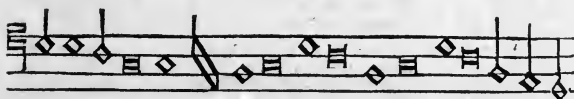


ful bird that murnyng made and mirthe of m[ange].  
child that softly slepe scho sate and sange.

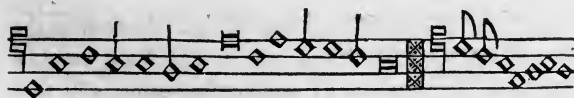
And here the *Lullaby* she uses upon the occasion :



Lullay lullow lully, lullay bewy



bewy lully bewy lully lullow lully lullay



baw baw my barne slepe softly now lullay lollow

lully lullay bewy bewy lully

bewy lully lullow lullay lullow baw baw

my barne slepe softly now.

The longest and only complete piece, is a dreaming relation of a dialogue supposed to have passed between the above lady and her infant son: It begins thus:

“ This ender nithgt,  
 I saug ha sithgt,  
 Ha may ha credill kepe;  
 Hande ever schuy sang,  
 Ande sayde in mang,  
 Lullay my child and slepe.”

This no doubt, as well as the third, and possibly the last, of the above extracts, was a Christmas carol, a species of composition of which the reader will find a tolerable number of examples in the course of the

‘following collection.’ It might indeed have been easily enlarged, but is sufficient to show, that poetry or song derived little advantage, in point of language or sentiment, from the imagined sublimity of the subject.

III. The music of these remote ages naturally leads to an enquiry after the instruments by which it was performed. Of these the HARP, as it was probably the most ancient, was long esteemed the chief. This instrument was well known in the time of Chaucer, by whom it is frequently mentioned. His *Frere* could play upon and sing to it\*; and the genial Wife of Bath had frequently danced to it in her younger days†, for which purpose, it seems to have been an ordinary retainer or visitant to taverns and such like places‡. It continued in use till after the reign of queen Elizabeth, possibly till the civil wars, but was long held in the lowest estimation §: since that time it has been

\* Prologue.

† Wife of Bath's prologue.

‡ Chaucer mentions the dancing of “yonge folk,” in

“ ——— stewes and tavernes,  
—with *harpés*, *lutés*, and *giternes* . .  
And right anon in comen tombesteres,  
Fetis and smale and yongé fruitesteres,  
*Singers with harpes*, &c.” Pardoners Tale.

§ From its being usually played by blind men, as *blind as a harper* became proverbial (see *Lilys' Sappho and Phao*, 1591); and the phrase *blind harper* a term of general ridicule and contempt.



entirely laid aside, or at least very rarely used as an English instrument \*. The SAUTRIE, or psaltery, was

Thus in Jonsons *Volpone* :

“ *Cæv.* O my dear Mosca, do's he not perceive us?

*Mos.* No more than a *blind harper*.”

Again in Cottons *Virgil Travestie* :

“ Quoth he, *blind harpers*, have among ye !”

Shakspeare has likewise used it in his *Loves Labour Lost* :

“ Nor woo in rime, like a *blind harpers* song.”

Shakspeare, however, certainly does not mean to treat it with contempt, when he makes Glendower say

“ I can speak English, lord, as well as you,  
For I was train'd up in the English court ;  
Where, being young, I framed to the *harp*,  
Many an English ditty lovely well.”

First part of K. H. IV. a. 3. s. 1.

\* “ *Honest Jack N*——*Is*, the harper,” is however remembered in one of Tom Browns *Letters from the Dead to the Living. Works*, ii. 191. And seems to have plyed at “ the Cellar at the *Still* [in the Strand].” See Wards “ *Satyrical Reflections upon Clubs*,” p. 272.

Thus also, in one of Tom D'urfeys songs :

“ Whilst merrily *blind Tom* that harp'd  
In tune our story tells.”

In *London Lyckpeny* we find :

“ Then I hyed me unto Estchepe,  
Onne cryes rybbs of befe & many a pye;  
Pewter pottes they clattered on a hepe,  
There was *harpe*, pype, and mynstrelsy;  
Yea by cock, nay by cock, some began crye,  
SOME SONGE OF JENKEN AND JULYAN for there medel :  
But for lack of mony I myght not spede.”

See MS. Harl. 367.

an instrument of the harp kind, on which *Hendy Nicholas*, the scholar of Oxenford, was an adept:

“ And all above there lay a gay *sautrie*,  
On which he made on nightés melodie;  
So swetély, that all the chamber rong,  
And *Angelus ad Virginem* he song.  
And after that he songe the kingés note.  
Full often blessed was his mery throte\*.”

*The Kinges Note* was doubtless some well-known song of the time, and probably the very same which is mentioned in *Vedderburnes Complaynt of Scotland* (usually ascribed to Sir James Inglis) printed at St. Andrews, in 1549, under the title of “kyng villyamis note.”

Chaucer mentions the *ROTE* as an instrument on which his *Frere* excelled:

“ Wel coude he singe and plaien on a *ROTE* †.”

This, it is conjectured, was the same with the more mo-

In one of Hogarths prints of the *Rakes progress*, a *harper*, a French horn player, and a ragged big belly'd female ballad singer are performing a concert in a brothel.

\* *Millers Tale*: Again:

“ He kissed here swete, and taketh his *sautrie*,  
And plaieth fast, and maketh melodie.”

† Prologue.

dern *vielle* \*, the *lyra mendicorum*, or hurdy-gurdy †, so frequent at this day in the streets of London, though not in the hands of the natives, the strings of which are agitated by the friction of a *wheel* ‡. It is likewise named by Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*,

“ —Harpe, citole, and RIOTE,  
With many a tewne and many a note :”

and by Spenser, in the fourth book of the *Faerie Queene* (Canto ix.)

“ There did he find in her delicious boure  
The faire Pœana playing on a ROTE.”

The CITOLE, or cistole, as it is elsewhere called (from *cistella*, a little box), is thought to have been the *dulcimer*, or some instrument of the same kind.

The RIBIBLE and GITERNE were favourite instruments of Absolon the parish clerk :

“ A mery child he was, so god me save ;  
In twenty manere could he trip and dance,

\* The *vielle* of the Jongleurs, which dr. Percy makes “ a kind of lute or guitar,” was the *violin*. See M. de la Ravalliere, *de l’Ancienneté des Chansons Françaises (Poësies du roy de Navarre)*, i. 249. M. le Grand, *Fabliaux ou Contes*, i. 49.

† The use of this term, though rejected by dictionary-makers, is not without *classical authority* :

“ Whom have we here ? a sightly swain and sturdy !  
Hum ! plays, I see, upon the *hurdy-gurdy*.” Midas.

See also Bonnel Thorntons Ode to St. Cecilia.

‡ See M. de la Ravalliere, *l’Ancienneté des Chansons*, p. 254. M. le Grand’s objection, grounded upon the equivocal term *cithara*, does not seem of much weight.

And playen songés on a small RIBIBLE,  
 Therto he song sometime a loud quible.  
 And as wel coud he play on a GITERNE.  
 In all the toun n'as brewhous ne taverne,  
 That he ne visited with his solas,  
 Ther as that any gaillard tapstere was\*."

The description of his serenading the carpenters wife is admirable:

"The moone at night ful clere and brighté shon,  
 And Absolon his giterne hath ytake,  
 For paramours he thoughté for to wake.  
 And forth he goth, jolif and amorous,  
 Til he came to the carpenterés hous,  
 A litel after the cockes had ycrow,  
 And dressed him up by a shot window,  
 That was upon the carpenterés wal.  
 He singeth in his vois gentil and smal;  
 Now, dere lady,—if thy wille be,  
 I pray you that ye—wol rewe on me;  
 Ful wel accordant to his giterning†."

The *ribible* was probably the REBEC or FIDDLE, which has been a popular instrument, and, by gradual improvement, has at length superseded almost every other. Its antiquity is unquestionable ‡. The CROUTH or crowd (cruð, Saxon, *crowd*, Welsh) was another, but larger instrument of the same nature §. The

\* Millers Tale.

† Ibid.—

‡ See M. de la Ravalliere, *l'Ancienneté*, &c. p. 249. Miltons *Poems*, by Warton, 1791, p. 55.

§ *Ficle* and *crowth* are both mentioned in song XI. class I. whence it should seem they were at that time distinct instruments. See also the figure and description of a crowth in Hawkins's *History of Music*, vol. ii. p. 273. and in the *Archæologia*, vol. iii. p. 30. Spenser calls

GITERNE is the cittern \* or guitar, which was anciently much used for singing to. Thus in the *Vision of Piers the Plowman*, one says, he can

“ —neither taber, ne trumpe, ne tell no gestes  
Farten ne fyssen at feastes ; ne harpen,  
Jape, ne juhgele, ne gentillye pype ;  
Ne neither sailen, ne saute, ne singe to the *gitterne* †.”

it “ the trembling crowd,” in allusion, no doubt, to the vibration or tremulous motion of the chords. *Crowd*, however, was in later times the common name of a *fiddle*, and *Crowder*, of a performer thereon ; whence the name of *Crowdero* in *Hudibras*. And that *fiddle* and *rebeck* were synonymous, appears from a passage in *The Knight of the burning Pestle*, where it is said to be “ present death for these *fidlers* to tune their *rebecks* before the great Turks grace.”

\* Drayton in his enumeration of the “ sundry Musick of England,” makes the *gittern* and *cittern* distinct instruments :

“ The *cythron*, the *pandore*, and the theorbo strike,  
The *gittern* and the kit the wand’ring *fidlers* like.”

Poly-Olbion, Song IV.

And they certainly were so. “ Sum tyme,” says Langham, “ I foote it with dauncing : noow with my *gittern*, and els with my *cittern*, then at the virgynalz : ye kno nothing cums amisse to mee : then carroll I up a song withall :” &c. *Letter signifying the queenz entertainment at Killingwoorth Castl*, 1575.

John Playford, in 1659, published “ A book of new lessons for the *cithren* and *gittern*, &c.” and from his preface to a later publication, intitled “ Musick’s delight on the *cithren*” (1666), it would seem that the principal if not the only difference between the two instruments at that period was that the *Gittern* was strung with *gut-strings*, the *Cittern* with *wire*. The latter is unquestionably the modern English guitar ; but whether the *gittern* of Chaucers time was the same instrument may possibly still remain a doubt. At any rate, *cittern* and *gittern* are originally the same word, from *cithara*, a harp or stringed-instrument, and the former, supposing the C soft, is a comparatively modern term.

† [8vo. 1561. *passus* 13.]

This instrument, which Chaucer thought worthy of the god of music, he has put with peculiar propriety into the hands of the *joly Absolon*, who, among his numerous accomplishments,

“ Wel coud leten blod, and clippe, and shave,”

as it appears, for many centuries, to have made part of the constant furniture of a barbers shop, where it was “ common to all men.” It seems of late, however, to have retrieved its credit, and to have received ample amends for its disgrace, in the hands of the fair sex.

Most of these instruments, with others, are enumerated in an old metrical romance, intituled, *The Squyr of lowe degre* :

“ There was myrth and melody,  
With harpe, getron, and sautry,  
With rote, ribible, and clokarde,  
With pypes, organs, and bumbarde,  
With other mynstrelles them amonge,  
With sytolphe and with sautry songe,  
With fydle, recorde, and dowcemere,  
With trompette and with claryon clere,  
With dulcet pipes of many cordes \*.”

The LUTE, mentioned by Chaucer, must, from the low state not only of the musical science, but of the mechanical arts in that age, have been essentially different from the modern instrument of the same name, which is said to have fallen into disuse on account of the superior degree of skill requisite to its performance †.

\* [Ritsons *Met. Rom.* iii. 189.]

† See Browns *Estimate*, vol. ii. p. 77. Sir J. Hawkins's *Hist. of Music*, iv. 394.—This instrument in Skeltons time was chiefly in

The CYMBAL, the TABOUR, the TYMBRE, the SISTRUM, are all mentioned, and some of them described, by Bartholomeus, in his book *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, which was translated into English by John de Trevisa, and first printed by Wynken de Worde.

The SYMPHONIE, likewise, which Chaucer mentions in his rime of Sir Topaz,

“ Here is the quene of faerie,  
With harpe and pipe, and *symphonie*,  
Dwelling in this place,”

was “ an instrument of musyke, . . . made of an holowe tree, cloyd in lether in eyther syde, and mynstrels betyth it wyth styckes \*.”

An extract from the romance of *Alisaundre*, by Adam Davie, will afford no bad idea of a grand con-

the hands of professors. See how he handles one of these *comely coystrownes*:

“ He lumbryth on a *lewde lewte* roty bulle joyse,  
Rumbill downe, tumbil downe, hey go now now.  
He fumblyth in his fyngering an ugly good noise,  
It semyth the sobbyng of an old sow.  
He wold be made moch of and he wyst how, &c.”

It is also noticed in an old poetical tract, intituled, *The Schole House of Women* (originally printed in or before 1557):

“ Or as the minstrel dooth intend  
With help of *lute*, finger, or quil.” Sig. D. j. 6.

And in Surreys Poems, first published in that year, is a beautiful address “ to his *Lute*,” by Sir T. Wyatt the elder.

\* Bartho. de Pro. Rerum.—Hawkins’s *Hist. of Music*, ii. 284. This instrument bears a pretty strong resemblance to the *romelpot* of the Hottentots, described by Vaillant.

cert, and the other amusements at a royal festival in the court of Edward II. or III. The author is speaking of the marriage of "kyng Phelip" with "Clorpatras the riche quene:"

"Spoused scheo is and set on deys,  
Now gynnith the geste of nobles.  
At theo feste was trumpyng,  
Pipyng and eke taboryng,  
Sytolyng and ek harpyng,  
Knyf pleyng and ek syngyng,  
Carolyng and turmentyng,  
Wrastlyng and ek flymyng.  
Theo game goth nought ful blyve,  
Ther som helieth and some wyve."

Chaucers Miller entertains his fellow pilgrims with the sound of the "BAGGEPIPE," which he played very well.

The "HORNEPIPES OF CORNEWAILE," mentioned in the *Romant of the Rose*, are thought to have been the same as the *pibcorn*, an instrument still used in some parts of the principality of Wales, of which Mr. Barrington has given a particular description\*. The *stock and horn* which Allan Ramsay mentions, and

\* *Archæologia*, iii. 33. *Pibcorn* is *cornpipe*, *pipeau de corne*. Thus in the *Complaynt of Scotland*, "the feyrd [scheiphyrd playit] on ane *cornepipe*." Hornpipe and cornpipe are synonymous. See before, p. li. n. 2. This instrument is likewise mentioned by Spenser:

"Before them yode a lusty taberere  
That to the 'meynie' on a *horne pype* playd,  
Whereto they dauncen eche one with his mayd.  
To see these folkes make suche jouisaunce,  
Made my heart after the pype to daunce."

*Shepherds Calendar, May.*



explains to be “ a reed or whistle, with a horn fixed to it by the smaller end,” is, however, with equal probability, the hornpipe of Chaucer. Though, after all, his “ *Cornewaile*” is not the county in England so called, but *Cornouaille* in Bretagne, which he found in his original \*.

The martial instruments of these ages were,

“ PIPES, TROMPES, NAKERES, and CLARIOUNES,  
That in the bataille blowen bloody sounes †.”

And the shepherd boys of Chaucers time had

“ —many a FLOITE and LITLYNG HORNE,  
And pipés made of grené corne ‡.”

And Richard Brathwaite (*Strappado for the Divell*. 1615. (12mo. p. 9.) has a poem addressed “ To the Queene of Harvest, &c. much honoured by the Reede, *Corne-pipe* and whistle.”

Again, in *The shepherds slumber* (Englands Helicon, 1600.)

“ In pescod-time, when hound to horne  
Gives eare, till buck be kill'd ;  
And little lads, with *pipes of corne*,  
Sate keeping beasts a-field.”

So in *Mid. Nights Dream*:

“ ————— But I know  
When thou hast stol'n away from fairy land,  
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,  
*Playing on pipes of corn*, and versing love,  
To amorous Phillida.”

Act. 2. s. 2.

\* v. 3991. “ Et sons nouveaulx de contretaille,  
Aux chalemeaulx de *Cornouaille*.”

† *Canterbury Tales*, i. 98. (Knights Tale.) A Nakere (Naquaire, F.) is a loud instrument somewhat resembling a hautboy. [The French word is explained by Roquefort to mean *petits tambours ou timbales*. ED.]

‡ *House of Fame*, iii. 133.

Bartholomeus observing, that as "shepe lovyth py-pynge, therefore shepherdes usyth pipes whan they walk with theyr shepe\*."

IV. The progress of Song-writing during the fifteenth century, may, in some degree, appear from the following collection; little additional information is to be gleaned during a period only interesting in battles and murders.

Among the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum (No. 682) is a collection of love poems, roundels, and songs, made by Charles duke of Orleans while a prisoner in England, in Henry the fiftys time. It is not to be expected that the poetry of a foreigner (and a prince of the blood too) should have much merit in an age in which that of the natives had so little.

The following, which is given as a specimen of this young noblemans talents, seems to be a sort of dialogue between him and his mistress, on his requesting the favour of a chaste salute:

[He.] Lende me yowre praty mouth, madame,  
Se how y knele here at yowre feet.

[She.] Whie wolde ye occupy the same?  
Now whereabowt first met me wite.

[He.] I wis dere hert to basse it swete,  
A twyse or thrise or that y die.

[She.] So may ye have when next we mete  
Toforne or ye it ocupie.

\* Hawk. *Hist. Music*, ii. 283.

- [He.] Or y it occupy, wel, wel;  
Is my reward but suche a skorne?
- [She.] Ye, woo is me for yowre seek hele,  
But it may heele right wel tomorne.
- [He.] Then se y wel though y were lorne,  
For oon poore cosse ye set not by.
- [She.] Seide y yow not ynough toforne?  
Ye may have or ye occupy.
- [He.] Ye, for that cosse y thanke yow that,  
For whie yet am y never the nere.
- [She.] Then come agayne this wot ye what?  
An other tyme, and not to yere.
- [He.] A fy, wel wel, a swet hert dere  
Bi verry god, ye mot aby.
- [She.] Nay bete me not, first take it here,  
Toforne or ye it occupy.
- [He.] Ye, so so, swete, ye, so, swete hert,  
Good thrift unto that praty eye.
- [She.] Nay erst lo must ye this avert,  
How y seide or ye it occupy.

A MS. in the Bodleian library has once contained either the whole or part of a song, of which it was found impracticable to make out more than the two first lines:

“ Joly cheperte of Aschell-down  
Can more on love than al this town.”

Mr. Warton, who has printed the first of them, seems to discover some resemblance between this same *Joly cheperte* and *Thomas of Ersildon*, the Scottish vaticinal rimer\*.

\* *Hist. English Poetry*, i. 76.—The No. of the MS. is 692.

After the first battle of St. Albans, between Henry VI. and the duke of York, by the mediation of the archbishop of Canterbury and other prelates, both parties were brought to a compromise and mutual exchange of promise of friendship. "For the outward publishing of this joyfull agreement," says Stow, "there was upon our Lady day in Lent, or five and twentieth day of March, [New Years Day, 1458] a solemne procession celebrated within the cathedrall church of Saint Paule, in the city of London: at the which the king was present, in his habite royall, with the crowne on his head; before him went, hand in hand, the duke of Somerset, the earle of Salisbury, the duke of Excester, and the earle of Warwick, and so one of the one faction, and another of the other. And behind the K. the duke of Yorke, and the queene, with great familiarity to all mens sights, whatsoever was meant to the contrary . . . ." \* This, it cannot be doubted, would be a spectacle highly grateful to the people, as it seemed to promise them a reprieve from the calamities of a civil war, which they had previously every reason to apprehend; it therefore certainly deserved to be celebrated by a happier bard than the author of such stanzas as the following:

" Whan charite is chosen with states to stonde,  
 Stedfast, and skill without distaunce,  
 Than wrathe may be exiled out of this lande,  
 And god oure gide to have the governance:  
 Wisdom & wellth with all plesaunce

\* *Annals*, (ed. 1631, fo.) p. 404.

May rightful regne and prosperite,  
 For love hath underlaide wrathful venjaunce,  
 Rejoise Anglond oure lordes acorded to be\*."

Other songs of this reign might be produced; and such readers as are not satisfied with the number printed in the following collection, may be referred to MS. Sloan. 2593, and MS. Harl. 4294, where they will find several more.

Skelton, laureat, in *the Bowge of Court*, his best serious poem, introduces a character under the name of "Harvy 'Hafter †," whose

"—Throte was clere, and lustely coulde fayne  
 And ever he sange, sithe I am nothinge plaine,  
 To kepe him from piking it was a grete paine."

Alluding no doubt to some well-known song. He likewise bids

"Holde up the helme, loke up, and lete god stere,  
 I wolde be merie what wind that ever blowe,  
 Heve and how rombelow, row the bote, Norman, rowe."

\* MS. Cotton. Vespasian, B. xvi. This compromise, however, may have given the same disgust to the more zealous partizans of the Red Rose which we are certain a former one did in the year 1450, See a curious copy of verses, preserved by Hearne, in the appendix to *Hemingi Chartularium*, which was affixed to the gates of the kings palace, where the parliament was sitting, and thus concludes:

"Hange uppe suche false men to awr soverayne lord,  
 That ever conseyled hym with fals men to be acordyd."

† Not *Haster*.

"Havel and Harvy *Hafter*,  
 Jacke travel, and Cole *crafter*  
*Why come ye not to Court.*"

This last line is certainly the scrap of an old ballad, "In this xxxii yeare [s. of Henry VI.]" says Fabian, "John Norman . . . . [mayor of London] upon the morowe of Symon & Judes daye, the accustomed day when the newe mayre used yearly to ryde with great pompe unto Westminster to take his charge, this mayre first of all mayres brake that auncient and olde continued custome, & was rowed thither by water, for the which the watermen made of hym a roundell or songe to hys great prayse, the which began, *Rowe the bote, Norman, rowe to thy lemman*, and so forthe, with a longe processe\*."

This Harvy 'Hafter' is represented entirely ignorant of prick-song, which, as an ordinary accomplishment, he expresses a great desire to learn:

"Princes of youghte, can ye singe by rote,  
Or shall I saile with you a feloship assaie,  
For on the booke I cannot sing a note;  
Wolde to god, it wolde please you some daye,  
A ballade booke before me for to laye,  
And lerne me to singe (Re mi fa sol)  
And when I faile, bobbe me on the noll."

\* Ad An. 1453. *Heve and howe rombelowe* appears to have been a favourite chorus with the old English tars. Thus, the author of *Cocke Lovelles botc*, an ancient satire, speaking of certain sailors, says:

"For joye theyr trumpettes dyde they blowe,  
And some songe *Heve and howe rombelowe*."

So again in the still more ancient metrical romance of *The Squyr of lowe degre*, the king tells his daughter;

"Your maryners shall synge a rowe  
*Hey how and rumbylawe*."

“ Ryot ” too, another character in the same poem,  
is a musical genius,

“ And ay he sange in fayth *decon thou crewe* \*.”

He could likewise perform a popular piece of church music, and accompany his voice with the sound of a flaggon:

“ Counter he coude *O lux* upon a potte.”

We have doubtless lost many of Skeltons ballads. In the enumeration of his works in “ *The Crowne of Lawrel*,” he mentions several things which one may reasonably conclude to have been of that species. For instance :

“ The umbles of venison, the botels of wyne,  
To faire maistres Anne that shuld have be sent,  
He wrote therof many a praty lyne,  
Where it became, and whither it went,  
And howe that it was wantonly spent.  
The balade also of the mustarde tarte.  
Such problems to paint it longeth to his arte.”

In a very old Morality, the earliest piece of that description, perhaps, now extant, intitled, “ The iiiii Elements †,” “ *Sensual Appetite*,” one of the characters, holds the following language :

\* This song is again mentioned in *Why come ye not to Court*.

† It was printed by Rastall, and from a passage alluding to the discovery of America, dr. Percy concludes it not to have been written later than 1510. Mr. Steevens, in a note to his last edition of Shakspeare, gives the date 1519; probably by mistake, as it does not appear that a second copy of it is known to exist.

“ Make rome syrs, and let us be mery,  
 With huff a galand, synghe tyrll on the bery,  
 And let the wyde worlde wynde;  
 Synghe, frysk a joly\*, with hey troly loly,  
 For I se well it is but foly,  
 For to have a sad mynd.”

And his advice to “ *Humanitye* ” is:

“ Ye shulde ever study pryncypall  
 For to comfort your lyfe naturall,  
 With metis and drynkes dilycate,  
 And other pastymes & pleasures among,  
 Daunsyng, laughyng, or PLESAUNT SONGE,  
 This is mete for your estate.”

In 1530 was published a collection of twenty part-songs, nine of four parts and eleven of three; composed by Cornysh, Pygot, Ashwell, master Tavernar, John Gwynneth, dr. Fayrfax, dr. Cowper, and R. Jones: but the *bassus* is alone preserved. The verbal contents are as follows:

1. Pater noster qui es in celis, &c.
2. In youth in age both in welth and woo.  
 Auxilium meum a domino.
3. By, by, lullaby, by, by, lullaby, wrockyd I my chyld.
4. Bewar my lytyl fynger, syr, I yow desyre.
5. She may be callyd a soverant lady  
 That ys a mayd and beryth a baby.
6. The bella, the bella, we maydins beryth the bella.
7. So gret unkyndnes withoute deservyng.

\* “ He how frisca joly under the grene wood tre,” is the burthen of an ancient song in the musical volume among the Kings MSS.



8. Who shall have my fayr lady.  
 9. Mynyon, go trym, go trym. (A satire against the Flemings).  
 10. Joly felowe, joly, joly felowe, joly,  
     Yf thou have but lytyll mony,  
     Spend it not in foly;  
     But spend yt on a prety wenche,  
     And she shal help the at a pinche,  
     Hey joly felow, joly.  
 11. And wyll ye serve me so.  
 12. Mi hart, my mynde, and my hole poure.  
 13. Love wyll I, & leve, so yt may befall.  
 14. And I mankynd have not in mynd.  
 15. Pleasure yt ys  
     To here, I wys,  
     The byrds syng [yng]e;  
     The dere in the dale,  
     The shepe in the vale,  
     The corne spryngyng.  
  
     Gods purvyauce,  
     For sustenance,  
     Yt ys for man;  
     Then we all wayse,  
     To hym gyve prase,  
     & thank hym than & thank hym than.  
 16. Concordans musycall jugyd by the ere.  
 17. Min hartys lust & all my plesure.

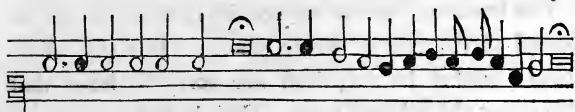
The other three pieces are lessons for the words *Ut re my fu so* [1]  
*la*, or *Fa la soll*.

The following song, of this reign, appears worthy of notice, if it were but from the circumstance of explaining a seemingly corrupted passage of an ancient Scottish writer, mentioned in a preceding page, who,

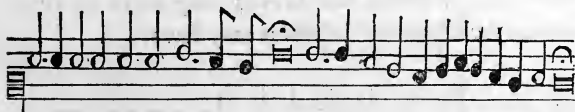
according to Mackenzie, among the titles of popular songs of the time, names

Couthume the rashes grene\*,

of which no one, it is supposed, has ever known what to make. For this discovery, we are indebted to the old book among the Kings MSS.



Colle to me the rysshys grene, Colle to me.



Colle to me the rysshes grene, Colle to me.

For my pastyme upon a day,  
I walkyde alone ryght secretly;  
In a mornyng of lusty May  
Me to rejoyce I dyd aplye.

Wher I saw one in gret dystresse,  
Complaynyng him thus pytuously;  
Alas! he sayde, for my mastres  
I well perseyve that I shall dye.

\* See *Lives of Scottish writers*, iii. 44. The original, however, (a most rare book) reads

“Cou thou me the raschis grene.”

Wythout that thus she of hur grace  
 To pety she wyll somewhat revert,  
 I have most cause to say alas,  
 For hyt ys she that hath my hart.

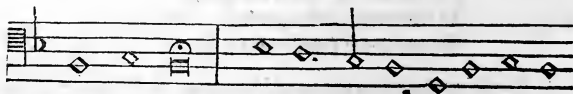
Soo to contynew whyle my lyff endur,  
 Though I fore hur sholde suffre dethe,  
 She hath my hart wythowt recure,  
 And ever shall duryng my brethe.

The burthen, *Colle to me*, &c. is, as usual, to be repeated at the end of every stanza. But the editor should neither be surprised nor sorry to learn that this is not the original song. *Colle* is *cull*.

The reader will pardon another extract from the same MS. of which the brevity may serve to compensate for whatever defects it may have:



Westron wynde, when wyll thou blow\*, the smalle rayne

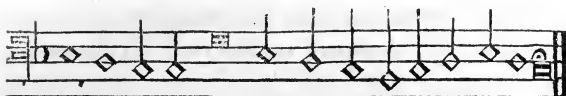


downe can rayne.

Cryst yf my love were in my armys

\* This reminds one of a stanza in an ancient and pathetic Scottish ballad:

“Marti’mas wind, when wilt thou blow,  
 And shake the green leaves from the tree?  
 O gentle death, when wilt thou come?  
 For of my life I am wearie.”



and I yn my bed a-gayne.

Puttenham, in his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589, p. 12.) mentions "one Gray" as having grown unto good estimation with king Henry VIII. and afterwards with the duke of Somerset, protector, "for making certaine merry ballades, whereof one chiefly was, *The hunte is up, the hunte is up.*"—Is this it?

"The hunt is up,  
The hunt is up,  
And now it is almost day;  
And he that's in bed with another mans wife,  
It's time to get him away\*."

\* The following are the words of an ancient round for four voices :

"The hunt is up, the hounds ar in the fyld,  
The chase is up and newly gone;  
Up then and folow at hand for shame,  
Els thow art lyke to leese the game."

"The first of the first three [who appear to *Kind-hart* in his *dream*] was an od old fellow, low of stature, his head was covered with a round cap, his body with a side skirted tawney coate, his legs and feete trust uppe in leather buskins, his gray haire and furrowed face witnessed his age, his treble viol in his hande, assured me of his profession. On which (by his continuall sawing having left but one string) after his best manner, hee gave me a *hunts up*: whome after a little musing i assuredly remembered to be no other but *old Anthony now now.*"

A foolish practice (which this little piece has brought to mind) was introduced by the puritan reformers, of moralising, as they called it, popular songs; that is, parodying all but a few lines at the beginning of the song, to favour their particular superstition, or the innovation they wished to effect\*. The following, indeed, is Scottish, but as the measure was not taken up in the North till there was no longer occasion for it in the South, and particularly as *The Hunt is up* was an English song, we may fairly enough lay claim to the honour of the Travestie:

“ With hunts up, with hunts up,  
It is now perfite day;  
Jesus our king is gane ‘ a ’ hunting,  
Quha likes to speed they may.”

There are several other stanzas, but none which appears to have any allusion to the original song †.

The earliest of these parodies seems to be one at the end of a MS. in the Kings Library (17. B. XLIII.) where it is written as prose. The beginning is given for the sake of the original words, the rest is fanatical trash:

\* Those modern puritans the methodists have adopted a similar practice, and sing their hymns to popular song-tunes, which one of their leaders used to say, had been too long devoted to, or were too good for, the devil. This foolery is admirably ridiculed by Shakespeare, where he speaks of the puritan who “ sings psalms to horn-pipes.” See *Winters Tale*.

† See “ Ane compendious booke of godly and spirituall songs, &c. Edinburgh, printed by Andro Hart.” 1801. 8vo.

“ Com home agayne,  
 Com home agayne,  
 Mi nowne swet hart, com home agayne;  
 Ye are gone astray  
 Out of your way,  
 There [for, swet hart,] com home agayne.”

In the before mentioned book of part-songs printed in 1530, are some of this sort of parodies, which is thus proved to have preceded the reformation by many years. The commencement and burthen of one of them is as follows :

“ Who shall have my fayr lady?  
 Who but I? who but I?  
 Who shall have my fayr lady?  
 Who hath more ryght therto?”

Another begins thus :

“ And I mankynd have not in mynd,  
 My love that mornyth for me, for me,  
 Who is my love but god above, &c.”

A popular species of harmony arose in this reign, of which the following collection will afford a few examples ; it was called *King Henrys Mirth*, or *Freemens Songs*, that monarch being a great admirer of vocal music, and even having the reputation of a composer. *Freemens Songs* is a corruption of *Three mens songs*, from their being generally for *three voices*. Thus the clown in Shakspeares *Winters Tale* :—“ She hath made me four and twenty nose-gays for the shearers : *three-man-song-men all*, and very good ones.” —And Carew expressly calls *John Dory* “ *an old*

*Three mans song.*" In the *Turnament of Tottenham* we read of *melody delycyous of syx meny sang* \*.

In the parliament holden in the 34th and 35th years of this reign, an act passed to purge and cleanse the kingdom of all religious plays, interludes, rhymes, BALLADS and SONGS, which, it is observed, are equally pestiferous and noysome to the commonweal; that is, we may presume, they are too apt to enlighten the public mind and afford the people an opportunity of expressing their sentiments.

The religious morality of *Lusty Juventus*, written and printed in the reign of Edward VI., opens with a song, which, as it is but short, may be given entire:

"In a herber grene aslepe where as I lay,  
The byrdes sange swete in the middes of the daye,  
I dreamed fast of myrth and play:  
In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure.

Methough[t] I walked stil to and fro,  
And from her company I could not go;  
But when I waked it was not so:  
In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure.

Therefore my hart is surely pyght  
Of her alone to have a sight,  
Which is my joy and hartes delygth:  
In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure."

Towards the end is another, but of less merit, in the same measure.

\* *Post. i. 94.* Are we from this expression to conclude that this was actually a song in six parts, or only that six men joined in singing the same melody? [Florio explains "*Cantarini*," *such as sing three mens songs, common begging singers.* Ed.]

In a MS. of Bennet college library, Cambridge, (No. 106) are two ballads upon the inclosure of commons, which appears to have caused great disturbances in this reign.

In the new edition of Lelands *Collectanea*\* is the Kings coronation Song, and another the ditty whereof is

“Sing up heart, sing up heart, sing no more down,  
But joy in king Edward that weareth the crown.”

The amorous and obscene songs used in the court of this virgin prince, gave such scandal to Thomas Sternhold, “being,” as Wood says, “a most zealous protestant and a very strict liver, that he forsooth turn’d into English metre 51 of Davids Psalms, and caused musicall notes to be set to them, thinking thereby that the courtiers would sing them instead of their sonnets, but [they] did not, only some few excepted †.”

John Baldwin, in *The Canticles or Balades of Solomon phrasely declared in English metre*, printed in 1549, wishes to God, “that such songes might once drive out of office the baudy balades of lecherous love, that commonly are indited and sung of idle courtiers in princes and noblemens houses ‡.”

Of queen Marys time there is one ballad extant, made on the unfounded report of her being with child §.

\* IV. 314. 319.

† *Athenæ Oxonienses*, i. 76. But see Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesie*, p. 12. where he says that “king Henry the 8, for a few Psalmes of David turned into English meetre by Sternhold, made him groome of his privy chamber, & gave him many other good gifts.”

‡ See Ames, v. i. 552. 636. 666.

§ Ames’s *Typographical Antiquities* by Herbert, vol. iii.



Long before the reign of queen Elizabeth, printed songs and ballads had become common. Laneham, describing the curious literary collection of Captain Cox, the mason of Coventry, has the following words: “What I rehear<sup>z</sup> heer, what a bunch of ballets and songs, ALL ANCIENT.—As, broom, broom on hil—So wo iz me begon, troly lo\*—Over a whinny weg—Hey ding a ding †—Bony lass upon a green—My bony on gave me a bek—By a bank as I lay ‡, and A HUNDRED MORE, he hath fair wrapt up in parchment, and bound with a whipcord ||.” The word ANCIENT

\* See *infra*, “Brume on hil” is likewise mentioned in the *Complaynt of Scotland*. [1548.]

† Has not this been the ballad of *Old Simon the king*?

Says old Simon the king,  
Says old Simon the king,  
With his aldropt hose,  
And his malmsey nose,  
Sing hey ding ding a ding ding.

A song with this title and chorus, occurs in Bp. Percy's folio MS. and in the 3d volume of Durfeys collection, but is probably of a later date than 1575.

‡ This last song is preserved in the old MS. already mentioned to have been found among the books of the Kings Library in the Museum. It is a love song, but without any other merit than antiquity. See also *Deutromelia*, 1609, 19. At the end of the only copy known to exist of the book of songs with musical notes by Cornyshe, Fairfax, and others, printed in 1530, a song is inserted in MS. beginning with the same words, but containing a laboured panegyric upon king Henry the 8th.

|| *Letter from Killingwoorth*, Lond. 1575, 12mo. b. 1. These printed ballads soon begun to be hawked up and down the country in baskets. In the pleasaunt and stately Morall of the threë Lordes

would scarcely be applied to any thing of a later date than the time of Henry VIII. Indeed their antiquity may be presumed from another circumstance, not one of them being now extant.

From "a very mery and pythie commedie," called "The longer thou livest the more foole thou art, a myrrour very necessarie for youth, and specially for such as are like to come to dignitie and promotion, . . . . newly compiled by W. Wager," imprinted at London, &c. in 4to. bl. l. without date, some time in the reign of queen Elizabeth, we glean scraps of a great many songs, most or perhaps all of them even at that time old, with some of which the reader can scarcely choose but be entertained, which may serve as an apology for the length of the quotation.

"¶ Here entereth Moros, counterfaiting a vaine gesture and a foolish countenance, synging the foote of many songes, AS FOOLES WERE WONT."

*Moros.*     Brome, brome on hill,  
                   The gentle brome on hill hill :  
                   Brome, brome on Hiue hill,

and three Ladies of London, 1590, 4to. b. l. *Simplicitie*, "in barte blacke, like a poore citizen," on being asked what daintie fine ballad he has now to be sold, says "Marie, child, I have Chipping Norton—A Mile from Chappel o' the Heath—A lamentable ballad of burning the popes dog—The sweet ballade of the Lincolnshire bagpipes—and Peggy and Willy—But now he is dead and gone—Mine own sweet Willy is laid in his grave, la, la, la, lan ti dan dan da dan, lan ti dan, dan tan derry do." And that it was the "vocation" of such a fellow to "bear his part" in a song, appears from the character of Autolycus, in the *Winters Tale*.

The gentle brome on Hiue hill,  
 The brome standes on Hiue hill a.  
 ¶ Robin, lende to me thy bowe, thy bowe,  
 Robin the bow, Robin, lende to me thy bow a\*.  
 ¶ There was a mayde come out of Kent,  
 Deintie love, deintie love;  
 There was a mayde cam out of Kent;  
 Daungerous be:  
 There was a mayde cam out of Kent,  
 Fayre, propre, small and gent,  
 As ever upon the grounde went,  
 For so should it be.  
 ¶ By a banke as I lay, I lay,  
 Musinge on things past, hey how.  
 ¶ Tom a Lin and his wife, and his wives mother  
 They went over a bridge all three together,  
 The bridge was broken and they fell in,  
 The devil go with all, quoth Tom a Lin†.  
 ¶ Martin Swart and his man, sodledum sodledum,  
 Martin Swart and his man, sodledum bell‡.

• See *infra*.

† Of this song the editor has fortunately met with a modern printed copy, but much altered, it should seem, from the original, beginning,

“Tommy Linn is a Scotchman born.”

In the *Complaynt of Scotland*, “Thom of Lin” is given as the name of a dance.

‡ Skelton, laureat, (who died in 1529) has an evident allusion to the same song:

“With hey trolly loly lo, whip here Jak.  
 Alumbek *sodyldym* syllorym *ben*,  
 Curiously he can both counter and knak  
 Of *Martyn Swart* and all hys mery men.”

Against a comely Coystrowne, &c.  
 Works (1736) p. 254.

¶ Com over the boorne Besse,  
 My little pretie Besse,  
 Com over the boorne Besse to me \*.  
 ¶ The white dove sat on the castell wall,  
 I bend my bow, and shoote her I shall;  
 I put her in my glove both fethers and all.  
 I layd my bridle upon the shelve,  
 If you will any more sing it yourselfe.

*Moros* having been interrupted by *Discipline*, goes on thus:

I have twentie mo songs yet,  
 A fond woman to my mother,  
 As I war wont in her lappe to sit,  
 She taught me these and many other;  
 I can sing a song of robin redbrest,  
 And my litle pretie nightingale,  
 There dwelleth a jolly foster here by west,  
 Also I com to drink som of your christmas ale.  
 Whan I walke by my selfe alone,  
 It doth me good my songs to render;  
 Such pretie thinges would soone be gon,  
 If I should not some time them remembre.

*Moros.* Before you go let us have a song,  
 I can retch up to sing, sol fa and past.

*Idleness.* Thou hast songes good stoare, sing one,  
 And we three the foote will beare.

*Moros.* Let me study, it will come anone,  
 Pepe, la, la, la, it is to hye there,

Martin Swart was concerned in the insurrection made by the lord Lovel and others against Henry VII., anno 1486, and was slain at the battle of Stoke; having been sent over with some troops, by Margaret duchess of Burgundy, sister to K. Edward IV.

\* Shakspeare has put these three identical lines into the mouth of Edgar, in K. Lear. A moralisation of the song is (with the music) in the editors folio MS.

- So, ho, ho, and that is to lowe,  
 Soll, soll, fa, fa, and that is to flatte,  
 Re, re, re, by and by you shall knowe,  
 My, my, my, howe saye you to that?
- Idlenes.* Care not for the 'key,' but what is thy song?
- Moros.* ¶ I have a pretty tytmouse,  
*All iiiii.* Come picking on my to,  
*the same.* Gossuppe with you I purpose,  
 To drinke before I go.
- Moros.* ¶ Little pretty nightingale,  
*All iiiii.* Among the braunches greene \*,  
*the same.* Geve us of your christmasse ale,  
 In the honour of saint Steven.
- Moros.* ¶ Robyn readbrest with his noates,  
 Singing alofte in the quere,  
*All iiiii.* Warneth to get you frese coates,  
*the same.* For winter then draweth nere.
- Moros.* ¶ My brigle lieth on the shelve,  
 Yf you will have any more,  
 Vouchsafe to sing it yourselfe,  
 For here you have all my stoare.
- Wrath.* A song much like th' authour of the same,  
 It hangeth together like fethers in the winde.
- Moros.* This song learned I of my dame,  
 When she taught me mustard sede to grinde.

*Wrath* seems to consider these scraps as *Moroses* own invention; and *Idlenesse* having before told the com-

\* This song, with music, is in the old book already mentioned among the Kings MSS. The first stanza is as follows:

“ The lytyll pretty nyghtyngale,  
 Among the levys grene,  
 I wolde I were with hur all nyght,  
 But yet ye wot not whome I mene.”

The last line is the concluding one of each stanza.

pany that he (Moros) could "sing songes and make rymes," one might have considered him as an *improvisatore*, or natural extempore poet, if he had not himself told us how he came by them.

*Ignorance*, in a dialogue between *Impietie* and *Cruellie*, is required to "sing some mery song," which unfortunately is not inserted, owing to an ordinary practice of our early dramatists, to leave the choice of the song to the performer \*. Upon the whole, this is certainly a most curious piece, and it is much to be desired, that a collection of these ancient moralities were given to the public; as they not only furnish numberless particulars of the domestic life and manners of our ancestors, but are besides infinitely more entertaining than any dramatic production before the time of Shakspeare.

"The over busie and too speedy returne of one maner of tune," says Puttenham, doth "too much annoy & as it were glut the eare, unlesse it be in small and popular musickes, song by these *Cantabanqui*, upon benches and barrells heads, where they have none other audience then boys or countrey fellowes that passe by them in the street, or else by *blind harpers*, or such like *taverne minstrels*, that give a fit of mirth

\* See Dodsleys *Old Plays* (edition 1780), vol. i. pp. 68. 282. Shakspeares Works by Johnson and Steevens (*Loves Labour Lost*, Act 3. sc. 1.) In Peeles "*Famous chronicle of king Edward I.*" 1593. is this curious stage direction: "Enter the Harper, and sing to the tune of *Who list to lead a souldiers life.*"

for a groat \*, &c. also they be used in carols and rounds, and such like light or lascivious poems, which are commonly more commodiously uttered by these buffons or vices in playes, then by any other person†."

Webbe also censures the vulgar songs of his time, which he calls "a few balde ditties made over the beere potts which are nothing lesse then poetry ‡."

The song in *Gammer Gurtons Garland*, first printed in 1575, which begins,

"I cannot eate but lytle meate,"

has been often mentioned as the first drinking song of any merit in the language, and as such has been frequently printed. It is certainly a singular performance, and deserves to be well known §.

\* That this was the common price long after Puttenham's time appears from Jonson's "*masque of the metamorphosed gipsies*," 1621, where, on the introduction of Cheeks the piper, or Tom Ticklefoot the taborer (it is not clear which) one of the company says:—"I cannot hold now, there's my *groat*, let's have a *fit* for mirth-sake." These groats gave rise to the expression of "fidlers money," though as that coin is no longer current, we now apply it to sixpences.

It is, therefore, evident, whatever might be the value of a groat at either period, that the reward was neither regarded as considerable, nor peculiar to "the old harpers;" but, on the contrary, that it was the ordinary and established fee of every musical performer. One may readily believe and it may be very easily accounted for, that all sorts of contributors to popular entertainment were much better paid formerly than they are at present.

† *Arte of English Poesie*, p. 69.

‡ *Discourse of English Poetrie*, 1586, 4to. b. l. sig. c. iii.

§ See it in the "*Select Collection of English Songs*," already cited.

The “*passing merrie Interlude of Tome Tyler and his wife*,” 1598, contains also a few humorous songs.

In an old pamphlet by Henry Chettle (before quoted) intitled, “*Kind-Harts Dreame*,” &c. 4to. black letter, without date, but supposed to be printed in 1592, is contained an ironical admonition to the ballad-singers of London, from Anthony Now Now \*, or Anthony Munday, a great ballad-writer, wherein he says, “When I was liked, there was no thought of that idle upstart generation of ballad-singers, neither was there a printer so lewd that would set his finger to a lascivious line.” But now, he adds, “ballads are abusively chanted in every street; and from London this evil has overspread Essex and the adjoining counties. There is many a tradesman, of a worshipfull trade, yet no stationer, who after a little bringing uppe apprentices to singing brokerie, takes into his shoppe some fresh men, and trustes his olde servantes of a two months standing with a dossen groatesworth of ballads. In which, if they prove thriftie, he makes them prety chapmen, able to spred more pamphlets by the state forbidden, than all the booksellers in London, &c.” The names of many ballads are here given, as “*Watkins Ale, The Carmans Whistle, Chopping-knives, and Frier Fox-taile*†. And out-roaring Dick and Wat

\* See *infra*.

† “I should hardly be perswaded, that anie professor of so excellent a science [as printing] would bee so impudent, to print such odious and lascivious ribauldrie, as *Watkins Ale, The Carmans Whistle*, and sundrie such other.” Letter (with the signature T. N.



Wimbars, two celebrated trebles, are said to have got twenty shillings a day, by singing at Braintree fair in Essex\*.

Bishop Hall thus censures the number of ballads published in his time :

“Some drunken rhymers think his time well spent,  
If he can live to see his name in print ;  
Who, when he is once fleshed to the presse,  
And sees his handsell have such faire successe,  
Sung to the wheele and sung unto the payle,  
He sends forth thraves of ballads to the sale †.”

By being *sung to the wheele and payle*, the author means sung by maids *spinning* and [*milking or*] *fetching water*. Lord Surrey, in one of his poems, says,

[for Thomas Nashe, but written in reality by Chettle, as he confesses in the above pamphlet] to his good friend A [nthony] M [unday]) prefixed to the latter's translation of “Gerileon of England. The second part, &c.” 1592, 4to. b. l. The object of this abusive letter has possibly been Thomas Delony. The tune of *Watkins Ale*, was in one of Dr. Pepuschs MSS. See *Wards Lives of the professors of Gresham College* (the Museum copy) p. 199. The *Carmen* of this age should seem to have been singularly famous for their musical talents. Justice Shallow, according to Falstaff's satirical description, “came ever in the rear-ward of the fashion ; and sung those *tunes* to the over-scutcht huswives, that he heard the *carmen whistle*, and sware they were *his fancies*, or *his good-nights*.” 2 Hen. IV. Act III. Scene II. See also Jonson's *Bartholomew fair*, act 1. scene 4. Skelton says of a professor in his time :

“He whystelyth so swetely, he maketh me to swet.”

\* Warton's *History of English Poetry*, vol. iii. p. 291.

† *Satires* (IV.) 1597. He very probably alludes to the peerless Elderton, who was no less famous for his drunkenness than his poetry. “Thomas [r. William] Elderton, who did arm himself with ale (as

“ My mothers *maids*, when they do sit and *spin*,  
They sing a song made of a fieldish mouse;”

Alluding perhaps to the fable of the *City Mouse and Country Mouse*. Thus also Shakspeare in his *Twelfth Night* :

“ The *spinsters* and the knitters in the sun  
Do use to chant it.”

This admirable writer composed the most beautiful and excellent songs, which no one (so far as we know) can be said to have done before him\*; nor has any one excelled him since. Many of them have been already inserted in a more refined collection than the following†, in which however some of his lighter pieces will be found in their due place. In the plays of this favourite of the muses, we find a number of fragments of old songs and ballads, which will afford us infinite amusement in our pursuit.

old father Ennius did with wine) when he ballated, had this, in that respect made to his memory :

“ Hic situs est sitiens atque ebrus Eldertonus,  
Quid dico, hic situs est? hic potius sitis est.”

Camdens Remaines, *Epitaphes*, p. 56.

Of this epitaph, dr. Percy has given the following version by Oldys :

“ Dead drunk here Elderton doth lie;  
Dead as he is, he still is dry :  
So of him it may well be said,  
Here he, but not his thirst is laid.”

\* Or at least but one, Marlows “ *Passionate Shepherd to his Love*,” is the only instance that can be excepted.

† See the Collection of songs referred to in a preceding note.

In the comedy of *Twelfth Night*, Act ii. Scene 3. Sir Toby, on the Clowns entering, says, "Now let's have a catch." "By my troth," exclaims Sir Andrew, "the fool hath an excellent breast. I had rather than forty shillings I had such a leg; and so sweet a breath to sing as the fool has. . . . Now a song." *Sir Toby*, "Let's have a song." "Would you have a love-song," says the Clown, "or a song of good-life," (*i. e.* a jolly bacchanalian song)? "O," says Sir Toby, "A love-song, a love-song." "Ay, ay," adds Sir Andrew (misconceiving the term) "I care not for good-life." Upon this the Clown sings a song beginning

"O mistress mine, where are you roaming,"

Which, though it does not at present appear to have any great merit, is pronounced by Sir Andrew, to be "excellent good i'faith." They presently "make the welkin dance," and "rouze the night-owl," with the catch of *Hold thy peace thou knave*, which is still preserved. Sir Toby being "in admirable fooling," sings, "*Three merry men we be*,"—"There dwelt a man in Babylon," and "*O the twelfth day of December*:" of which the two first are extant, but the last is unfortunately lost. Another, beginning

"Farewell dear heart, since I must needs be gone,"

Of which they sing a few lines, is likewise preserved. Shakspeare takes every opportunity of discovering his attachment to these old and popular reliques. In the same play Orsino says,

“ Now good Cesario, but that piece of song,  
That old and antique song we had last night,  
Methought it did relieve my passion much,  
More than light airs and recollected terms  
Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times.”

The Clown being accordingly brought in to sing it,  
the duke proceeds :

“ O fellow, come, the song we had last night :—  
Mark it, Cesario, it is old and plain :  
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,  
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,  
Do use to chant it ; it is silly sooth,  
And dallies with the innocence of love,  
Like the old age.”

The words, indeed, are scarcely answerable to the  
eulogium ; but united to the air, might have had all  
the effect upon the audience the author proposed.

In the course of this play, we have another scrap  
from the Clown :

“ Hey Robin, jolly Robin,  
Tell me how thy lady does.  
My lady is unkind perdie,  
Alas, why is she so ?  
She loves another. ——— \*”

He also concludes the piece with an epilogue song, of  
which the first stanza is,

“ When that I was and a little tiny boy,  
With hey ho, the wind and the rain ;  
A foolish thing was but a toy,  
For the rain it raineth every day.”

\* This song has been recovered by dr. Percy, and is inserted in  
the 4th edition of the *Reliques*.

It is remarkable that Shakspeare puts these shreds chiefly into the mouths of his fools and lunatics. Edgar, in *King Lear*, personating the character of a Bedlamite, sings,

“Sleepest or wakest thou jolly shepherd?  
Thy sheep be in the corn,  
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,  
Thy sheep shall take no harm.”

Again :

“Child Rowland to the dark tower came.”

This, if a song, was probably some translation from the French or Spanish. *Rowland* is the *Orlando* of the Italian romancers, who had him from France, and gave him to Spain. As to the words which follow, they have not the least connexion with *Child Rowland*, but belong indeed to the story of *Jack the Giant Killer* :

“His word was still fie, foh, and fum,  
I smell the blood of a British-man.”

Some of the little effusions, uttered by Ophelia, in *Hamlet*, are very pathetic. For instance :

“He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone ;  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,  
Larded with sweet flowers ;  
Which bewept to the grave did go,  
With true love showers.”

A number of these fragments having been ingeniously

worked up by dr. Percy into a little tale, in humble imitation of so respectable an example, something of the same nature is attempted in the following collection.

Master Silence, in his cups, has a stanza for every occasion: we shall do nothing, says he, but

“ Eat and drink, and make good chear,  
And thank god for the merry year,  
When flesh is cheap, and females dear,  
And lusty lads roam here and there  
So merrily, and ever among so merrily.”

Again:

“ Be merry, be merry, my wife has all;  
For women are shrews, both short and tall:  
'Tis merry in hall, when beards wag all;  
And welcome merry Shrove-tide.  
Be merry, be merry.”

Again:

“ A cup of wine, that's brisk and fine,  
And drink unto the leman nine;  
And a merry heart lives long a.”

In the comedy of *Much Ado about Nothing*, Benedick attempts to sing the following lines:

“ The god of love  
That sits above,  
That knows me, and knows me,  
How pitiful I deserve.”

This is the beginning of an old popular song by Will Elderton; a puritanical parody of which is now extant.

In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, *Old Merry Thought* sings a variety of shreds, which have all the appearance of being fragments of old songs :

“ She cares not for her daddy, nor  
She cares not for her mammy, for  
She is, she is, she is,  
My lord of Lowgraves lassy.”

“ Give him flowers enow, Palmer ; give him flowers enow ;  
Give him red and white, and blue, green and yellow.”

“ Go from my window, love, go ;  
Go from my window, my dear ;  
The wind and the rain  
Will drive you back again,  
You cannot be lodged here.

Begone, begone, my juggy, my puggy,  
Begone, my love, my dear :  
The weather is warm,  
'T will do thee no harm ;  
Thou canst not be lodged here\*.”

And in the tragedy of *Bonduca*, Junius sings :

“ She set the sword unto her breast,  
Great pity it was to see,  
That three drops of her life-warm blood,  
Run trickling down her knee.”

Again :

“ It was an old tale ten thousand times told,  
Of a young lady was turn'd into mould,  
Her life it was lovely, her death it was bold.”

\* The whole song of which these two stanzas are a fragment is, with some little variation, and the original music, preserved in the 4th volume of D'Urfey's “ *Pills to purge melancholy*,” 1719. It is also printed at the end of Heywoods *Rape of Lucrece*, 1620.

These fragments are the rather noticed, as they may chance to prove the means of recovering the entire ballad.

Toward the end of the long reign of queen Elizabeth, Richard Johnson, author of the History of the Seven Champions of Christendom, and Thomas Deloney, the historian of the Gentle Craft, &c. wrote ballads for the press, to be sung about the streets of London, and up and down the country, in which they seem to have excelled both their predecessors and contemporaries. For though Elderton was known and celebrated for the prince of ballad-mongers, and seems to have made the composition of such things his sole profession\*, yet are those of his, which have come down to us, by no means to be compared to such as, upon the authority of the different garlands published under their respective names, we may reasonably attribute to Johnson and Deloney†.

\* "I scorn'd your ballad then, though it were done  
And had for *finis*, William Elderton."

DRAYTON.

† See "The Crown Garland of Golden Roses," by Richard Johnson [1612, *Bib. Bod.*] 1683. "The Garland of Delight," containing Chronicles, Histories, &c. written by Thomas Delone, the thirtieth edition, 1681, 12mo. b. 1.—"The Royal Garland," by T. D. 1681; and in "The Garland of Good Will," by T. D. 1688, all in the Pepysian library. From these it should appear, that Deloney was author of *Fair Rosamond*, one of the best of the old English ballads. The "Garland of Good Will" appears to have been originally published before 1596. It is extant in the Pepysian library, and was till very lately what is called a *chap-book*. In the



Of the merits of Anthony Munday as a ballad writer, we have no opportunity to judge; not a single specimen of his abilities in that line being now to be discovered.

V. The number of ancient printed songs and ballads which have perished must be considerable. Very few exist of an earlier date than the reign of James, or even of Charles the first\*. Being printed only on single sheets, which would fall chiefly into the hands of the vulgar, who had no better method of preserving their favourite compositions, than by pasting them upon the wall†, their destruction is easily accounted for.

same collection is "The Garland of Delight, &c. by Thomas Delone," and "The Royal Garland of Love and Delight, by T. D." A still scarcer work is, "Strange histories, or songs and sonnets, of kings, princes, dukes, lords, ladyes, knyghts and gentlemen: &c. By Thomas Delone, Lond. 1612, 4to." in which Dr. Percy found "the ballad of *Fair Rosamond*," though he is probably mistaken in concluding it to have been first published therein; as it is believed that this industrious artist produced his compositions over and over under different titles. There is a later edition in the above library. There is no collection of Eldertons songs, of which no more than one or two are known to be preserved.

\* The oldest printed ballad known to be extant, is that on the downfall of Thomas Lord Cromwell, in 1540, reprinted by Dr. Percy.

† This measure, which may in some parts be still observed, is alluded to by Cotton:

We in the country do not scorn  
Our walls with ballads to adorn,  
Of Patient Grissel and the Lord of Lorn.

The practice of collecting them into books, did not take place till after queen Elizabeths time, and is probably owing to Johnson and Deloney, who, when they were advanced in years, and incapable perhaps of producing any thing of merit, seem to have contented themselves with collecting their more juvenile or happier compositions into little penny books, entitled *Garlands*: of these, being popular and others reprinted, many are still extant, particularly in the Pepysian library\*.

Those pieces which we now call old ballads, such as *Fair Rosamond*, *The Children in the Wood*, and the *Ladys Fall*, which an ingenious writer seems to consider “as the native species of poetry of this country†,”

And by Swift:

The ballads pasted on the wall,

Of Joan of France, and English Mall\*.

*See also Walton & Cottons Angler ed. Nicolas vol. I. p. 95.*

\* See Percy, i. lxxvii. and the preceding page.

† Aikin, *Essays on Song Writing*, p. 27. “Many of the ancient ballads,” he says, “have been transmitted to the present times, and in them the character of the nation displays itself in striking colours. The boastful history of her victories, the prowess of her favourite kings and captains, and the wonderful adventures of the legendary saint and knight-errant, are the topics of the rough rhyme and unadorned narration, which was ever the delight of the vulgar, and is

\* These ladies are only mentioned as probable subjects; there is no song about either. Indeed, the line itself is from *Hudibras*.

A bold virago, stout and tall

As Joan of France, or English Mall.

*English Mall*, by the way, is neither *Mary Carleton*, the German princess, as Dr. Grey observes, nor *Moll Cutpurse*, as the writer of this note formerly supposed. He readily coincides with Dr. Percy that *Mary Ambre* is the lady meant.

are comparatively modern, that is of the latter end of the 16th century, not one of them being found in print, or noticed in any book before that period\*. Queen Dido, to be sure, from its popularity at that time, would seem to be somewhat older, and is probably one of the oldest, as it is certainly one of the best we have. "O you ale-knights," exclaims an old writer, "you that devoure the marrow of the mault, and drinke whole aletubs into consumptions; that sing QUEENE DIDO over a cupp, and tell strange news over an alepot, &c†."

If indeed, by "native species of poetry," is meant a species peculiar in this country, it is very certain that we have as little pretension to originality in this respect as in any other; which a very slight acquaintance with the ballad poetry of other countries will

now an object of curiosity to the antiquarian and man of taste." The illustration of this passage by apposite examples, would have been a favour to readers less happy in their researches after these rough rhymes and unadorned narrations than the author.

\* The earliest notice of any of these old ballads, is that which Shakspeare has put into the mouth of Falstaff, in the second part of K. Hen. IV. Act ii. Scene 4.

"When Arthur first in court began."

Which was at that time in all probability a new and popular ballad; and likely enough by Richard Johnson, who had a great turn for subjects of chivalry and romance. *The children in the wood* appears to have been written in 1595. See Ames's *Typographical antiquities*, by Herbert.

† Jacke of Dover, his Quest of Inquirie, &c. 1604, 4to. (fig. 2.)

be sufficient to prove. Our most ancient popular ballads, if we may judge from the few specimens preserved, were singularly rude, and not above two or three of these are known to have been printed for the people. It is barely possible that something of the kind may be still preserved in the country by tradition. The editor has frequently heard of traditional songs, but has had very little success in his endeavours to hear the songs themselves\*.

An ingenious Frenchman has projected the history of his country by a chronological series of songs and ballads†. And the multitude of manuscript and printed collections preserved in the royal library, or otherwise attainable, would leave a diligent compiler at no loss for materials. A history of England of this

\* In a copy of verses addressed to Mr. (afterward Dr.) Blacklock, by Richard Hewitt, (a boy whom, during his residence in Cumberland, he had taken to lead him); on quitting his service, are the following lines :

How oft these plains I've thoughtless prest;  
Whistled, or sung some fair distrest,  
Whose fate would steal a tear.

“Alluding,” as it is said in a note, “to a sort of narrative songs, which make no inconsiderable part of the innocent amusements with which the country people pass the winter nights, and of which the author of the present piece was a faithful rehearser.” *Blacklocks Poems*, 1756, 8vo. p. v. It is a great pity, if these pieces have any merit, that some attempt is not made to preserve them.

† M. Meusnier de Querlon, *Memoire historique sur la chanson* (*l'Anthologie Française*, tome I.) p. 44, 45.

sort would be no less interesting or delightful; but the task is impossible\*.

It has been elsewhere observed that the age of queen Elizabeth is the æra of Catches and Gleees, of which the editor will only now add that he should wish to see a better account than has hitherto appeared. The large and valuable collection published under the direction of the Catch Club does not contain any more ancient than the year 1600†. *Hold thy peace thou knave* is probably much earlier than the time of Shakspeare, by whom it is introduced in his Twelfth Night. *There lyes a pudding in the fire* is likewise very old. Both these with the music are preserved by sir John Hawkins. Samuel Harsnet, who died archbishop of York, in his "declaration of egregious popish Impostures," London, 1604, p. 94. has the following passage: "*Lustie Jollie Jenkin* (another of Saras captain devils names) by his name should seeme to be foreman of the motley morrice: he had under him, saith himselfe, forty assistants, or

\* Dr. Percy having mentioned the "*fabulous and romantic songs* which for a long time prevailed in France and England, before they had books of chivalry in prose," observes, that "in both these countries, the *Minstrels* still retained so much of their original institution, as frequently to make *true events* the subject of their songs;" and indeed, that "the memory of events was preserved and propagated among the ignorant laity, by scarce any other means than the *popular songs* of the *Minstrels*;" adding in a note, that "*the Editors MS. contains a multitude of poems of this latter kind.*" It may be observed, however, that not one of this multitude has made its appearance in public.

† Although some are perhaps to be found of much greater antiquity.

rather (if I mistake not) he had beene by some *old Exorcist* allowed for the *Master Setter* of *catches*, or *roundes*, used to be sung by *Tinkers*, as they sit by the fire with a pot of good ale between their legges: *Hey jolly Ienkin, I see a knave a drinking, et cæt."* The words and music (for 3 voices) of the catch here alluded to are to be found in *Pammelia*, 1618, and Ramsays *Tea Table Miscellany*, and in Arnolds *Essex harmony*, II. 103. It may be the oldest thing of the kind extant. There has certainly been some considerable revolution in the national taste. Catch singing which at present is a favourite science with nobility was two or three centuries ago the amusement of drunken tinkers.

This slight and imperfect essay ought not to be concluded without a wish, that they who are in possession of curiosities of this nature, for almost every song prior to the commencement of the seventeenth century is a curiosity, would contrive some method or other of making them public, or at least of acquainting us with their existence, and thereby preserving them from that destruction to which they are otherwise so exceedingly liable. With respect to the collection now produced, there is scarce a public library which has not been explored, in order to furnish materials for it. Its contents, indeed, are far from numerous; a defect, if it be one, which neither zeal nor industry has been able to remedy.

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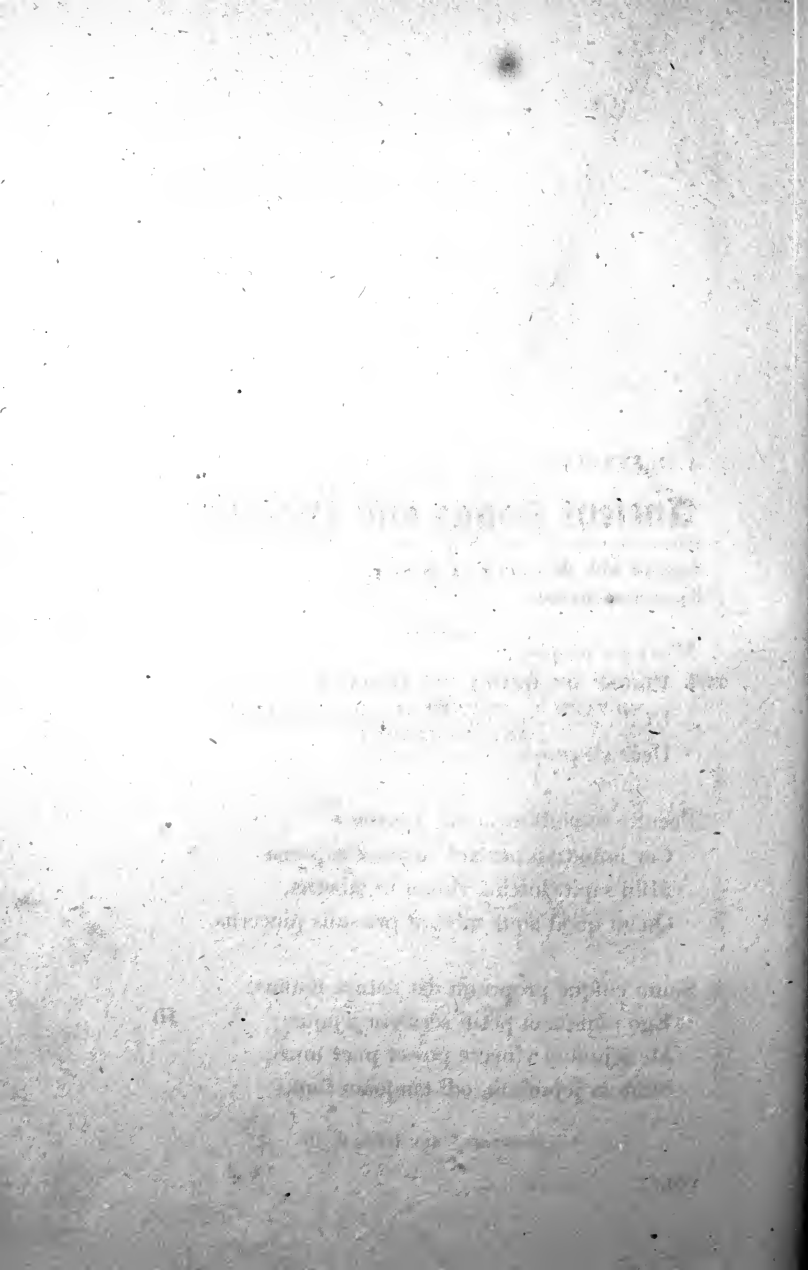
# **Ancient Songs and Ballads.**

## **CLASS I.**

**COMPRISING**

**THE REIGNS OF HENRY II, RICHARD I, HENRY III,  
EDWARD I, EDWARD II, EDWARD III,  
AND RICHARD II.**





I.

A DRINKING ODE OF WALTER MAPES, ARCH-  
DEACON OF OXFORD.

“Who in the time of king Henry the second” (says Camden) “filled England with his meriments, [and] confessed his love to good liquor, with the causes, in this maner \* :”

MIHI est propositum in taberna mori,  
Vinum sit appositum morientis ori :  
Ut dicant, cùm venerint, angelorum chori,  
Deus sit propitius huic potatori.

Poculis accenditur animi lucerna,  
Cor imbutum nectare volat ad superna.  
Mihi sapit dulcius vinum in taberna,  
Quàm quod aqua miscuit præsulis pincerna.

Suum cuique proprium dat natura munus,  
Ego nunquam potui scribere jejunos : 10  
Me jejunum vincere posset puer unus,  
Sitim et jejunium, odi tanquam funus.

\* “*Remaines*,” 4to. 1605, p. 19.

Unicuique proprium dat natura donum,  
 Ego versus faciens, vinum bibo bonum,  
 Et quod habent melius dolia cauponum,  
 Tale vinum generat copiam sermonum.

Tales versus facio, quale vinum bibo,  
 Nihil possum scribere, nisi sumpto cibo,  
 Nihil valet penitus quod jejunos scribo,  
 Nasonem post calices carmine præibo. 20

Mihi nunquam spiritus prophetiæ datur,  
 Nisi tunc cùm fuerit venter bene satur,  
 Cum in arce cerebri Bacchus dominatur,  
 In me Phœbus irruit, ac miranda fatur.

---

IMITATION, BY ROBERT HARRISON, OF DURHAM \*.

I'M fix'd:—I'll in some tavern lie,  
 When I return to dust;  
 And have the bottle at my mouth,  
 To moisten my dry crust:  
 That the choice spirits of the skies  
 (Who know my soul is mellow)  
 May say, Ye gods, propitious smile!  
 Here comes an honest fellow.

\* Formerly master of the Trinity School in Newcastle-upon-Tyne;  
 and the early and able preceptor of the present Lord Chancellor and  
 Lord Stowell. He died in October, 1802. *Ed.*

\* See note to advertisement

My lamp of life 'I'll' kindle up  
-With spirits stout as Hector ; 10  
Upon the flames of which I'll rise  
And quaff celestial nectar.  
My lord invites me, and I starve  
On water mix'd with wine ;  
But, at *The Grapes*, I get it neat,  
And never fail to shine.

To every man his proper gift  
Dame Nature gives complete :  
My humour is—before I write,  
I always love to eat, 20  
For, when I'm scanty of good cheer,  
I'm but a boy at best :  
So hunger, thirst, and Tyburn-tree  
I equally detest.

Give me good wine, my verses are  
As good as man can make 'em ;  
But when I've none, or drink it small,  
You'll say, The devil take 'em !  
For how can any thing that's good  
Come from an empty vessel ? 30  
But I'll out-sing even Ovids self  
Let me but wet my whistle.

With belly full, and heart at ease,  
And all the man at home,  
I grow prophetic, and can talk  
Of wonderful things to come.

When, on my brains high citadel,  
 Strong *Bacchus* sits in state,  
 Then *Phæbus* joins the jolly god,  
 And all I say is great.

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## II.

## A BALLAD OF KING RICHARD THE FIRST.

[Composed A. D. 1193, during his long and unjust detention in the castle of Losemsten, by the emperor Henry VI, on returning from the Holy Land.] Printed (with valuable annotations) by Sinner (*Catalogus bib. Bernensis*, tom. 3, p. 370), from a manuscript of the 13th century.

Another, but very inaccurate copy, is inserted in the preface to "*La tour tenebreuse, et les jours lumineux, contes Anglois*," par *Mademoiselle L'Heritier* (Paris, 1705), along with a "*Chanson en langue Provençale, dont le commencement est de Blondel, et la fin du roy Richard*." Mr. Walpoles researches seem very limited.

JAI nuls hons pris ne droit sa raison  
 Adroitement, sensi com dolans non ;  
 Maix per confort puet il faire chanson :  
 Moult ai damis, maix povre sont li don,  
 Honte en auront, se por ma reanson  
 Seux les II. hivers pris.

Se sevient bien mi homme et mi baron,  
 Anglois, Normant, Poitevin et Gascon,  
 Ke gi n'avoie si povre compaignon

Ke je laissaisse, por avoir, en pixon ; 10  
 Je nel dis pais por nulle retraisson,  
 Mais encore seux je pris.

Or sai je bien de voir, certainement,  
 Ke mors, ne pris, n'ait amis, ne parent,  
 Quant on me 'laisse' por or, ne por argent,  
 Moult m'est de moi, maix plux m'est de ma gent,  
 C'après ma mort auront reproche grant,  
 Se longuement seux pris.

N'est pais merveille se j'ai le cuer dolent,  
 Quant mes sires tient ma terre en torment ; 20  
 S'or li membroit de nostre sairement  
 Ke nos feimes anduis communement ;  
 Bien sai devoir ke seans longuement  
 Ne seroie pais pris.

Se sevient bien Angevin et Frain,  
 Cil baichelier ki or sont riche et sain,  
 Kencombries seux, loing d'eaus, en autrui mains ;  
 Forment m'amoient, maix or ne m'aime grain ;  
 De belles airmes sont ores 'veux' li plain,  
 Portant ke je seux pris. 30

[V. 15. lait.]

[V. 20. By *mes sires* (*mon seigneur*) Richard means Philip-Augustus, king of France, whose vassal he was.]

[V. 29. veut.]

Mes compagnons, cui jamoie et cui j'ain,  
 Ceals de Caheu, et ceaulx de Percherain,  
 Me di chanson kil ne sont pais certain ;  
 Nonkes vers eaus no' le cuer fauls ne vain :  
 S'il me gueroient, il font moult ke vilain,  
 Portant ke je seux pris.

Contesse seur\*, vostre pris souverain  
 Vos sault ; et gairt cil a cui je me clain,  
 Et par cui je seux pris ;  
 Je ne dis pais de celi de chairtain, 40  
 La meire Loweis.

---

The following version of this ballad (or rather of the Provençal translation of it) inserted by dr. Burney, in his *History of Music*, (ii. 238) is added by the present editor :

No wretched captive of his prison speaks,  
 Unless with pain and bitterness of soul ;  
 Yet consolation from the Muse he seeks  
 Whose voice alone misfortune can controul.  
 Where now is each ally, each baron, friend,  
 Whose face I ne'er beheld without a smile,  
 Will none, his sovereign to redeem, expend  
 The smallest portion of his treasures vile.

\* This is addressed to his sister Joan, married, first, to William II, king of Sicily, [and] afterward [to the] earl of Toulouse, whence she is here called *countess*.

Though none may blush that near two tedious years,  
Without relief, my bondage has endur'd, 10  
Yet know, my English, Norman, Gascon peers,  
Not one of you should thus remain immur'd ;  
The meanest subject of my wide domains,  
Had I been free, a ransom should have found ;  
I mean not to reproach you with my chains,  
Yet still I wear them on a foreign ground !

Too true it is, so selfish human race !  
“ *Nor dead, nor captives, friend or kindred find,*”  
Since here I pine in bondage and disgrace,  
For lack of gold, my fetters to unbind. 20  
Much for myself I feel, yet ah ! still more  
That no compassion from my subjects flows ;  
What can from infamy their names restore,  
If, while a pris'ner, death my eyes should close.

But small is my surprize, though great my grief,  
To find, in spite of all his solemn vows,  
My lands are ravag'd by the Gallic chief,  
While none my cause has courage to espouse.  
Though lofty tow'rs obscure the chearful day,  
Yet, through the dungeon's melancholy gloom, 30  
Kind Hope, in gentle whispers, seems to say,  
“ Perpetual thralldom is not yet thy doom.”

Ye dear companions of my happy days,  
Oh Chail and Pensavin, aloud declare,  
Throughout the earth in everlasting lays,  
My foes against me wage inglorious war.



Oh tell them too, that ne'er among my crimes  
Did breach of faith, deceit or fraud appear ;  
That infamy will brand to latest times  
The insults I receive while captive here. 40

Know all ye men of Anjou and Touraine,  
And every bach'lor knight, robust and brave,  
That duty now and love alike are vain,  
From bonds your sov'reign and your friend to save.  
Remote from consolation here I lie,  
The wretched captive of a pow'rful foe,  
Who all your zeal and ardour can defy,  
Nor leaves you aught but pity to bestow !

---

### III.

#### A SONG OR CATCH IN PRAISE OF THE CUCKOO.

This curious piece, which is thought to be "the most ancient English song, with [or without] the musical notes, any where extant," is preserved in a manuscript of the Harleian Library, in the British Museum (No. 978). It has been already published by Sir John Hawkins in his very instructive and entertaining *History of Music*, vol. ii. p. 93, and at p. 96 of the same volume it is reduced into the scale of modern composition. The ingenious author remarks that "Mr. Wanley has not ventured precisely to ascertain the antiquity of this venerable musical relic," but adds, "that the following observations will go near to fix it to about the middle of the fifteenth century." A conjecture in which he is, doubtless, egregiously mistaken, as the manuscript is evidently of much higher

antiquity, and may, with the utmost probability, be referred to as early a period (at least) as the year 1250.

Under the words here given are those of a Latin hymn, to which Sir John Hawkins, on the authority of Du Cange, thinks the term *Rota* alone refers; an opinion for which there does not appear sufficient reason; the word implying no more than our *Round*. And hence perhaps a passage in Shakspeare may receive some illustration. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia, speaking of a ballad of "The false steward who stole his masters daughter," exclaims—"O how the *wheel* becomes it!" evidently meaning the burthen or return of the stanza.

"It is observable," the above learned writer continues, "that the most ancient species of musical imitation is the song of the Cuckow, which must appear to be a natural and very obvious subject for it. Innumerable," he says, "are the instances that might be produced to this purpose: a very fine madrigal in three parts, composed by Thomas Weelkes, organist of Chichester cathedral, about the year 1600, beginning 'The Nightingale the organ of delight,' has in it the Cuckow's song. Another of the same kind, not less excellent, in four parts, beginning 'Thirsis, sleepest thou?' occurs in the Madrigals of John Bennet, published in 1599. Viraldi's Cuckow concerto," he adds, "is well known, as is also that of Lampe, composed about thirty years ago."

SUMER is icumen in,  
 Lbȳde sing cuccu;  
 Groweth sed, and bloweth med,  
 And springth the wde nu.  
 Sing, cuccu!

Awe bleteth after lomb,  
 Lhouth after calve cu;  
 Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth,  
 Murie sing cuccu.

Cuccu, cuccu, well singes thu, cuccu, 10  
 Ne swik thu naver nu.  
 Sing, cuccu, nu, sing, cuccu,  
 Sing, cuccu, sing, cuccu, nu.

---

## IV.

## A BALLAD ON RICHARD, KING OF THE ROMANS,

BROTHER OF KING HENRY THE THIRD.

[From a MS. of Edward the seconds time, in the Harleian Library,  
 No. 2253.]

SITTETH alle stille, ant herkneth to me :  
 The kyn[g] of Alemaigne, bi mi leauté,  
 Thritti-thousent pound askede he  
 For te make the pees in the countrè,  
     Ant so he dude more.  
 Richard,  
 Thah thou be ever trichard,  
     Tricthen shalt thou never more.

Richard of Alemaigne, whil that he wes kyng,  
 He spende al is tresour opon swyvyng, 10  
 Haveth he nout of Walingford oferlyng,  
 Let him habbe, ase he brew, bale to dryng,  
     Maugre Wyndesore.  
 Richard, &c.

The kyng of Alemaigne wende do ful wel,  
 He saisede the mulne for a castel,  
 With hare sharpe swerdes he grounde the stel,  
 He wende that the sayles were mangonel,  
                     To helpe Wyndesore.

Richard, &c.

20

The kyng of Alemaigne gederede ys host,  
 Makede him a castel of a mulne-post,  
 Wende with is pride, ant is muchele bost,  
 Brohte from Alemayne moni sori gost,  
                     To store Wyndesore.

Richard, &c.

By god, that is aboven ous, he dude muche synne,  
 That lette passen over-see the erl of Warynne.  
 He hath robbed Engelond, the mores ant the fenne,  
 The gold ant the selver ant yboren henne,  
                     For love of Wyndesore.

Richard, &c.

Sire Simond de Mountfort hath suore bi ys chyn,  
 Hevede he nou here the erl of Waryn,  
 Shuld he never more come to is yn,  
 Ne with sheld, ne with spere, ne with other gyn,  
                     To help Wyndesore.

Richard, &c.

Sire Simond de Montfort hath suore by ys 'fot,'  
 Hevede he nou here sire Hue de Bigot,

40

Al he shulde grante here twelf-moneth scot,  
Shulde he never more with his sot pot,

To helpe Wyndesore.

Richard, &c.

Be the luef, be the loht, sire Edward,  
Thou shalt ride sporeles o thy lyard,  
Al the ryhte way to Dover-ward,  
Shalt thou nevermore breke foreward.

Ant that reweth sore,

Edwàrd,

50

Thou dudest ase a shreward,

Forsoke thyn emes lore \*.

\* The MS. here repeats "Richard, &c." which mr. Ritson has intentionally omitted. *Ed.*

## V.

A BALLAD ON THE DEATH OF SIMON DE MONT-  
FORT, EARL OF LEICESTER,

Slain at the battle of Evesham, in Worcestershire, on tuesday the 4th of August, 1265, by one of whose adherents it has evidently been made. "The poet looks upon him as a martyr; and regrets the loss of Henry his son, Hugh le Dispenser, justice of England, and others who then lost their lives; and concludes with a stanza in English." WANLEY.

The English stanza which Mr. Wanley erroneously supposed to conclude this ballad is as follows; but has no sort of connexion therewith, and is, in fact, divided from it by an independent stanza in French:

"Erthe toc of erthe erthe wyth woh  
Erthe other erthe to the erthe droh  
Erthe leyde erthe in erthe ne throh  
Tho hevede erthe of erthe erthe ynoh."

[From the same MS.]

CHAUNTER mestoit, mon cuer le voit,

En un dure langage,

Tut enploraunt fust fet le chaunt,

De nostre duz baronage.

Qe pur la pees, si loynz après,

Se lesserent detrere

Lor cors trencher e demenbrer

Pur salver Engleterre.

Ore est ocys la flur de pris,

Qe taunt savoit de guere,

10

Ly quens Mountfort, sa dure mort

Molt enplorra la terre.

Sicom je qui par un mardi  
 Firent la bataille,  
 Tot à cheval fust le mal,  
 Sauntz nulle pedaile.  
 Tres malement y ferirent  
 De le espie forbie  
 Qe la part sire Edward\*  
 Conquist la mestrie.  
 Ore est ocis, &c.

20

Mes, par sa mort, le cuens Mountfort  
 Conquist la victorie,  
 Come ly martyr de Caunterbyr  
 Finist la vie.  
 Ne voleit pas li bon Thomas  
 Qe perist seinte eglise,  
 Ly cuens, auxi, se combati  
 E morust sauntz feyntise.  
 Ore est ocys, &c.

30

Sire Hue le fer, ly Despencer;  
 Tres noble justice†,  
 Ore est a tort lyvre à mort  
 A trop male guise:  
 Sire Henri, pur veir le dy,  
 Fitz le cuens de Leycestre,  
 Autres assez, come vous orrez,  
 Par le cuens de Gloucestre.  
 Ore est ocis, &c.

\* Afterward Edward I.

† 1260-1265.

Qe voleint moryr, e mentenyr 40

La pees e la dreiture,  
Le seint martir lur fra joyr  
Sa conscience pure.

Qe velt moryr, e sustenir  
Les houmes de la terre,  
Son bon desir acomplir  
Quar bien le guerdom fere.  
Ore est, &c.

Pres de son cors, le bon tresors,  
Une heyre troverent 50

Les faus ribaus tant furent maus  
E ceux qe le tuerent :  
Molt fust pyr, qe demenbryr  
Firent le prodhoume,  
Qe de guerrier e fei tener  
Si bien savoit la soume.  
Ore est, &c.

Priez touz, mes amis douz,  
Le fitz seinte Marie,  
Qe lenfant her puissant 60

Meigne en bone vie,  
Ne vueil nomer li estoler,  
Ne vueil qe lem die  
Mes, pur lamour le salveour,  
Priez pur la clergie.  
Ore est ocys, &c.



Ne say trover rien, quil firent bien,  
 Ne baroun ne counte,  
 Les chivalers e esquiers  
 Touz sunt mys à hounte, 70  
 Pur lur lealté e verité,  
 Que tut est anentie,  
 Le losenger purra reigner,  
 Le fol pur sa folie.  
 Ore est ocis, &c.

Sire Simoun, ly prodhom,  
 E sa compagnie,  
 En joie vont, en ciel amount,  
 En perdurable vie.  
 Mes Jhesu Crist, qe en croyz se mist, 80  
 Dieu enprengre cure  
 Qe sunt remis e detenuz  
 En prisone dure.  
 Ore est ocys, &c.

---

TRANSLATION, BY GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.\*

IN song my grief shall find relief,  
 Sad is my verse and rude ;  
 I sing in tears our gentle peers  
 Who fell for Englands good.

\* [The ingenious editor of "*Specimens of the early English poets*," &c. It was made at mr. Ritsons request.]

Our peace they sought, for us they fought,  
For us they dar'd to die ;  
And where they sleep, a mangled heap,  
Their wounds for vengeance cry.  
On Eveshams plain is Montfort slain,  
Well skill'd the war to guide ; 10  
Where streams his gore shall all deplore  
Fair Englands flower and pride.

Ere tuesdays sun its course had run  
Our noblest chiefs had bled.  
While rush'd to fight each gallant knight,  
Their dastard vassals fled.  
Still undismay'd, with trenchant blade  
They hew'd their desperate way :  
Not strength or skill to Edwards will,  
But numbers gave the day. 20  
On Eveshams plain, &c.

Yet, by the blow that laid thee low,  
Brave earl, one palm was given ;  
Nor less at thine than Becket's shrine  
Shall rise our vows to heaven !  
Our church and laws, your common cause,  
'Twas his the church to save,  
Our rights restor'd, thou, generous lord,  
Shalt triumph in thy grave.  
On Eveshams plain, &c. 30

Dispenser true, the good sir Hugh,  
Our justice and our friend,  
Borne down with wrong, amidst the throng,  
Has met his wretched end.  
Sir Henrys fate need I relate,  
Our Leicesters gallant son,  
Or many a score of heroes more  
By Gloucesters hate undone?  
On Eveshams plain, &c.

Each righteous lord who brav'd the sword, 40  
And, for our safety, died,  
With conscience pure shall aye endure,  
Our martyr'd saint beside.  
That martyr'd saint was never faint  
To ease the poor mans care ;  
With gracious will he shall fulfill  
Our just and earnest prayer.  
On Eveshams plain, &c.

On Montforts breast a hair-cloth vest  
His pious soul proclaim'd ; 50  
With ruffian hand, the ruthless band  
That sacred emblem maim'd :  
And, to assuage their impious rage,  
His lifeless corpse defac'd,  
Whose powerful arm, long sav'd from harm,  
The realm his virtues grac'd.  
On Eveshams plain, &c.

Now all draw near, companions dear,  
To Jesus let us pray,  
That Montforts heir his grace may share, 60  
And learn to heaven the way.  
No priest I name ; none, none I blame,  
Nor aught of ill surmise.  
Yet, for the love of Christ above,  
I pray be churchmen wise.  
On Eveshams plain, &c.

No good, I ween, of late is seen  
By earl or baron done ;  
Nor knight or squire to fame aspire,  
Or dare disgrace to shun. 70  
Faith, truth, are fled, and, in their stead,  
Do vice and meanness rule ;  
E'en on the throne may soon be shown  
A flatterer or a fool.  
On Eveshams plain, &c.

Brave martyr'd chief ! no more our grief  
For thee or thine shall flow ;  
Among the bless'd, in heaven ye rest  
From all your toils below.  
But, for the few, the gallant crew, 80  
Who here in bonds remain,  
Christ condescend their woes to end,  
And break the tyrants chain !  
On Eveshams plain, &c.

## VI.

A BALLAD ON THE COMMISSION OF TRAIL-  
BASTON\*.

— “being a sort of libel upon that commission, issued by our king Edward I. near the end of his reign ; that is about A. D. 1306.

Herein the author says, that he served his lord the king both in peace and war in Flanders, Scotland, and Gascoign ; but wanted to return into his own country. He names some of the commissioners or judges (who are not so particularly mentioned in every chronicle) . . . .

The last stanza shews the privacy wherein it was written . . . . .”

WANLEY.

[From the same MS.]

TALENT me prent de rymer e de geste fere  
Dune purveaunce qe purveu est en la terre  
Mieux valsit uncore que la chose fust afere  
Si dieu ne prenge garde je quy que sourdra guere.

\* [The following curious account of the origin and objects of this commission is to be found in the Chronicle of Peter Langtoft, a contemporary rhimer, as translated by Robert Mannyng, (ii. 327.):

THE moneth of September yolden was Strivelyn  
Edward may remembre the travaille and the pyn.  
With many grete encumbre of in hard stoure,  
At Brustwick opon Humbre ther he mad sojoure.  
Sir Jon of Warene that ilk tyme gan deie,  
His body was redy then in grave for to leie.  
After the enterment the kyng tok his way,  
To the south he went thorgh Lyndesay.  
He spired, as he yede, who did suilk trespas,

Ce sunt les articles de Trayllebastoun :  
 Salue le roi meismes, de dieu eit maleysoun  
 Qe adeprimes graunta tiel commissioun,  
 Quar en ascuns des pointz n'est mie resoun.

Brak his pes with dede, tille he in Scotland was ;  
 Of suilk suld be spoken, if thei mot be atteyned.

\* Wise men of gode gaf ansuere to the kyng,  
 That suilk foles yode, it was certeyn thing,  
 Thorgh the lond is don suilk grete grevance,  
 Bot it be mendid son, a werre may rise o chance.  
 Thise contekours whidere thei assigned a stede that es,  
 And ther thei com togidere and mak a sikernes,  
 That thei salle alle go to whom or where thei wille,  
 To robbe, bete, or slo, ageyn all manere skille.

Thei profere a man to bete, for two schilynges or thre,  
 With piked staves grete beten salle he be.  
 In feire and markette thei salle seke him oute :  
 Alle the lond is sette with suilk foles stoute.  
 If a chapman wille not lene of his merchaundie  
 In his hous for tene thei do him vilenie,  
 Or els he be at one largely to give of his.  
 Els thei salle him ilkone bete him that he pis.  
 For men of suilk maners, bot ther be som justise,  
 Sone, in for yers perchance, a werre salle rise.

\* " Respouns ount fet al reis gentz de bien voillaunce,  
 Coment parmy la terre fet est graunt grevance  
 Par commune contekours, qe sunt par flaunce  
 Obligez ensemble à une purveaunce ;  
*Traylbastouns* sunt nomez de cel retenaunce.  
 En faïres et marches se ' proferent ' fere covenauce.  
 Pur iii souz, ou iiïi, ou pur la vayllaunce,  
 Batre un prod home, qe unqes fist nosaunce," &c.

*MS. Gall.* [Cotton. Julius, A. V.]

Sire, si je voderoi mon garsoun chastier,  
 De une buffe ou de deus, pur ly amender, 10  
 Sur moi betera bille e me fra d'attachier,  
 E avant qe isse de prisone raunsoun grant doner.

Quauraunte soue parvent pur ma raunsoun,  
 E le viscounte vint a son guerdoun,  
 Qu'il ne me mette en parfounde prisoun :  
 Ore agardez, seigneurs, est ce resoun ?

Pur ce me tendroi antre bois sur le jolyf umbray,  
 La n'y a fauceté, ne nulle male lay,  
 En le bois de Bel-regard, ou vole le jay,  
 E chaunte russinole touz jours santz delay. 20

The kyng herd alle the fame, the pleynt of ilka toun,  
 And gaf them a newe name, and cald them *Trailebastoun*.  
 The date was a thousand thre hundred mo by five,  
 Suilk men thorgh the land he did tham tak bilyve.

The kyng thorgh the lond did seke men o resons,  
 And with the justise tham bond, to site on *Trailebastons*.  
 Som thorgh quest thei demed be bonden in prisons,  
 And tho that fled thei flemed als the kynges felons.  
 Som men out the[i] kast of lond was holden wrong ;  
 Fals covenantz thei brast thorgh powere holden long ;  
 And som gaf raunson after ther trespas,  
 Als the dede was don, so the amendes was.  
 Bot men did amend suilk folie openly knowen,  
 Non suld them defend, ne dur wonne in ther owen.

See also M. Westm. 450. T. Wal. 90. Trivet. 339. Knyghton,  
 2494. (2559, 2606, 2626). *Abridgment of records*, 67, &c. and  
 Spelman, *in voce*.—ED.]

Mes le male doseynes, dount dieu neit ja pieté,  
 Parmi lur fauce bouches me ount enditée  
 De male robberies, e autre mavestée,  
 Que je nos entre mes amis estre receptée.

Jai servi my sire le roy en pees e en guere,  
 En Flaundres, e Scoce, en Gascoyne sa terre,  
 Mes ore ne me sai je point chevisaunce fere,  
 Tot mon temps ay mis en veyn pur tiel houme plere.

Si ces mavois jurours ne se vueillent amender,  
 Que je pus a mon pais chevalcher e aler, 30  
 Si je les pus atendre la teste lur 'ferroi\*' voler,  
 De touz lur manaces ne dorroi un denier.

Ly Martyn et ly Knouille sunt gent de pieté,  
 E prient pur les povres quil eyent sauveté.  
 Spigurnel† e Belflour sunt gent de cruelté,  
 S'il fuissent en ma baylie ne serreynt retournée.

Je lur appre[n]droy le giw de Traylebastoun,  
 E lur bruseroy leschyne e le cropoun,  
 Les bras e les jaumbes ce serreit resoun,  
 La lange lur tondroy, e la bouche ensoun. 40

Qy cestes choses primes comenca  
 Ja jour de sa vie amende ne serra,  
 Je vous di pur veyr trop graunt perche ena,  
 Quar pur doute de prisone meint laroun serra.

\* [froï.]

† Henry Spigurnal was one of the justices of the Kings Bench in 1308.



Y tel devendra leres que ne fust unque mes,  
 Que pur doute de prisone ne ose venir a pes,  
 Vivre covient avoir chescun jour ades,  
 Qy ceste chose comenca yl emprist grant fes.

Bien devoient marchaunz e moygues doner malicoun,  
 A tous iceux que ordinerent le Traillebastoun, 50  
 Ne lur vaudra un ayle le roial proteccioun,  
 Que il ne rendront les deners sauntz reگردoun.

Vous qy estes endite je lou venez a moy,  
 Al vert bois de Belregard la ny a nul ploy,  
 Forque beste savage e jolyf umbroy,  
 Car trop est dotouse la commune loy.

Si tu sachez de lettrure e estes coronee  
 Devaunt les justices serrez appelee,  
 Uncore poez estre a prisone retornee,  
 En garde de le evesque jesque seiez purgee. 60

E soffryr messayse e trop dur penaunce,  
 E par cas naverez james delyveraunce\*,  
 Pur ce valt plus ou moi a bois demorer  
 Qen prisone le evesque syerge gyser.

Trop est la penaunce e dure a soffrer,  
 Qy le mieux puet eslyre fol est qe ne velt choyser,

\* The third and fourth lines of this stanza, riming in *aunce*, seem to be lost: as it is observable that the four lines of every preceding stanza rime together; which, upon this supposition, those of the remaining stanzas will do: and the number of lines in the last stanza, which are now six, will in that case be the same with the rest.

Avant sanoy poy de bien ore su je meins sage,  
Ce me fount les male leis par mout grant outrage.

Que nos a la pes venyr entre mon lignage  
Les riches sunt à raunsoun povres à estolage 70  
Fort serroit engager ce qe ne puet estre aquytee,  
Cest la vie de houme que taunt est cher amee.

E je nay mye le chatel de estre rechatee,  
Mes si je fusse en lur baundoun a mort serroi lyveree,  
Uncore attendroy grace e orroi gent parler,  
Tiels me dient le mal que me ne osent aprochier.

E volentiers verroient mon corps le denger,  
Mes entre myl debles dieu puet un houme sauver,  
Cely me prist saluer que est le fitz Marie  
Car je ne su coupable, endite su par envye. 80

Qy en cesti lu me mist dieu lur maldie  
Le siecle est si variant fous est qe saffye  
Si je sei compagnoun e sache de archerye,  
Mon veisyn irra disaunt cesti est de compaignie.

De aler bercer à bois e fere autre folie,  
Que ore vueille vivre come pork 'menra' \* sa vye,  
Si je sache plus de ley qe ne sovent eux,  
Yl dirrount cesti conspyratour de estre 'fous' †.

E le heyre naprocheroy de x lywes ou deus,  
De tous veysinages hony serent ceux, 90

\* [marra.]      † [faus.]

Je pri tote bone gent qe pur moi vueillent prier,  
 Qe je pus a mon pais aler e chevaucher.

Unqe ne fu homicide certes à moun voler,  
 Ne mal robberes pur gent damager.  
 Cest rym fust fet al bois desouz un lorer,  
 La chaunte merle, russinole e cyre lesperver :  
 Escrit estoit en parchemyn pur mout remenbrer,  
 E gitte en haut chemyn qe um le dust trover.

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## VII.

### A BALLAD AGAINST THE SCOTS:

“ many of whom,” Mr. Wanley observes, “ are here mentioned by name, as also many of the English beside the king and prince.” It particularly notices Sir William Walleys, taken at the battle of Dunbar, 1305, and Sir Simon Frisell [or Fraser], taken at the battle of Kyrkenclif, 1306, both of whom “ were punished as traitors to our king Edward the first, and their heads set (among others of their countrey-men) upon London-bridge : and of the coronation of Robert le Brus and his lurking afterward.”

This ballad contains a variety of incidents little noticed by historians.

From the same MS.

LYSTNETH, lordynges, a newe song ichulle bigynne,  
 Of the traytours of Scotlond, that take beth wyth gynne,  
 Mon that loveth falsnesse, and nule never blynne,  
 Sore may him drede the lyf that he is ynne,

Ich understonde :

Selde was he glad

That never nes asad

Of nythe ant of onde.

That y sugge by this Scottes that bueth nou to drawe,  
 The hevedes o Londone-brugge, whosé con yknaue ; 10  
 He wenden han buen kynges, ant seiden so in sawe,  
 Betere hem were han ybe barouns, ant libbe in godes  
 lawe

Wyth love.

Whosé hateth soth ant ryht,  
 Lutel he douteth godes myht,  
 The heye kyng above.

To warny alle the gentilmen that bueth in Scotlonde,  
 The Waleis wes to drawe, seththe he wes an honge,  
 Al quic biheveded, ys boweles ybrénd,  
 The heved to Londone-brugge wes send, 20

To abyde.

After Simond Frysel,  
 That wes traytour ant fykel,  
 Ant yclud ful wyde.

Sire Edward oure kyng, that ful ys of pieté,  
 The Waleis quarters sende to is oune contré,  
 On four half to honge huere myrour to be,  
 Theropon to thenche that monie myhten se,  
 Ant drede.

Why nolden he bewar 30  
 Of the bataile of Donbar,  
 Hou evele hem con spede\*.

\* The Scots had been defeated there with great loss, anno 1296.

Bysshopes ant barouns come to the kynges pes,  
 Ase men that weren fals, fykel ant les,  
 Othes hue him sworn in stude ther he wes,  
 To buen him hold ant trewe for alles cunnes res,

Thrye :

That hue ne shulden ayeyn him go,  
 So hue were temed tho ;

Weht halt hit to lye ? 40

To the kyng Edward hii fasten huere fay,  
 Fals wes here foreward so forst is in May,  
 That sonne from the southward wypeth away ;  
 Moni proud Scot therof mene may

To yere.

Nes never Scotlond

With dunt of monnes hond

Allinge aboht so duere.

The bisshop of Glascou ychot he wes ylaht,  
 The bisshop of Seint-Andrè bothe he beth ycaht, 50  
 The abbot of Scon with the kyng nis nout saht,  
 Al here purpos ycome hit ys to naht,

Thurh ryhte :

Hü were unwis

When hii thohte pris

Ayeyn huere kyng to fyhte.

Thourh consail of thes bisshopes, ynemned byfore,  
 Sire Robert the Bruytz furst kyng wes ycore,

He mai everuche day ys fon him se byfore,  
 Yef hee mowen him hente ichot he bith forlore, 60

Sauntz fayle.

Soht forté sugge,

Duere he shal abugge

That he bigon batayle.

Hii that him crounede proude were ant bolde,  
 Hii maden kyng of somer, so hii ner ne sholde,  
 Hii setten on ys heved a croune of rede golde,  
 Ant token him a kyneyerde, so me kyng sholde,

To deme.

Tho he wes set in see

70

Lutel god couthe he

Kyneriche to yeme.

Nou kyng Hobbe in the mures yongeth \*,  
 Forté come to toune nout him ne longeth ;  
 The barouns of Engelond, myhte hue him grype,  
 He him wolde techen on Englyssh to pype,  
 Thourh streynthe :

\* K. Robert Brus, after the battle of Kirkencliffe (or Methven, as it is more generally called) fled into the Highlands, where he lurked for some time. In a pretended conversation between him and his queen, reported by some of our old historians, she is made to say, "You are but a Summer king, I take it; I do not imagine you will be a Winter one." (M. West. 456.) This calumny seems alluded to in v. 66.

Some chronicle, quoted by Spelman, v. *Maiuma*, supposes her, after she was taken by the English, to have said that her husband and herself were like to be such a king and queen as led dances round a maypole. See also Holinshed, *ad an.* 1306.

Ne be he ner so stout,  
 Yet he bith ysoht out  
 O brede ant o leynthe. 80

Sire Edward of Carnarvan (Jhesu him save ant see !)  
 Sire Emer de Valence, gentil knyht ant free,  
 Habbeth ysuore huere oht that, *par la grace dee*,  
 Hee wolleth ous delyvren of that false contree,  
 Yef hii conne\*.

Muche hath Scotlond forlore,  
 Whet alast, whet bifore,  
 Ant lutel pris wonne.

Nou ichulle fonge ther ich er let,  
 Ant tellen ou of Frisel, ase ich ou byhet. 90  
 In the batayle of Kyrkenclyf Frysel wes ytake,  
 Ys continuaunce abatede eny bost to make

Biside Strivelyn ;  
 Knyhtes ant sweynes,  
 Fremen ant theynes,  
 Monye with hym.

So hii weren byset on everuche halve,  
 Somme slaye were, ant somme dreynte hemselfe ;  
 Sire Johan of Lyndeseye nolde nout abyde,  
 He wod into the water his feren him bysyde, 100  
 To adrenche.

Whi nolden hii bewar ?  
 Ther nis non ayeyn star ;  
 Why nolden hy hem bythenche.

\* A very judicious proviso, as appeared in the sequel.

This wes byfore seint Bartholomeus masse,  
 That Frysel wes ytake, were hit more other lasse ;  
 To sire Thomas of Multon, gentil baron ant fre,  
 Ant to sire Johan Jose bytake tho wes he,

To honde :

He wes yfetered weel 110

Bothe with yrn ant wyth steel

To bringen of Scotlonde.

Sone, therafter, the tydynge to the kyng com,  
 He him sende to Londone, with mony armed grom  
 He com yn at Newegate, y telle yt 'ou' aplyht,  
 A gerland of leves on ys hed ydyht,\*

Of grene ;

For he shulde ben yknowe

Bothe of heghe ant of lowe

For traytour y wene. 120

Yfetered were ys legges under his horse wombe,  
 Bothe with yrn ant with stel mankled were ys honde,  
 A gerland of pervenke set on his heved,  
 Muche wes the poer that him wes byreved

In londe :

So god me amende,

Lutel he wende

So be broht in honde.

\* So Wallace, at his mock-trial at Westminster, was "crowned with laurel," as Stowe relates, "for that he had said, in times past, that he ought to bear a crown in that hall (as it was commonly reported)." V. *ante* v. 11. and *post* v. 180.



Sire Herbert of 'Norham'\*, feyr knyht ant bold,  
 For the love of Frysel ys lyf wes ysold, 130  
 A wajour he made, so hit wes ytold,  
 Ys heved of to smhyte yef men him brohte in hold,

Wat so bytyde: —

Sory wes he thenne  
 Tho he myhte him kenne  
 Thourh the toun ryde.

Thenne seide ys scwyer a word anon ryht,  
 Sire, we beth dede, ne helpeth hit no wyht,  
 Thomas de Boys the scwyer wes to nome,  
 Nou, ichot, our wajour turneth ous to gome, 140

So ybate:

Ydo ou to wyte,  
 Here heved wes of smyte,  
 Byfore the tour-gate.

This wes on oure levedy even†, for sothe ych under-  
 stonde,

The justices seten for the knyhtes of Scotlonde,  
 Sire Thomas of Multon ‡, an hendy knyht ant wys,  
 Ant sire Rauf of Sondwych §, that muchel is 'hold'  
 in prys,

\* He was one of the Scottish prisoners in the Tower; and is said to have been so confident of the safety or success of sir Simon Fraser, that he had offered to lay his own head on the block if that warrior suffered himself to be taken; and (however involuntarily) it seems he kept his word. Vide M. West. 460.

† 7th September, 1306.

‡ He was one of the Justices of the Kings Bench in 1289. 17 E. 1.

§ Made a Baron of the Exchequer 5 E. 2. 1312.

Ant sire Johan Abel ;  
 Mo ymihte telle by tale, 150  
 Bothe of grete ant of smale,  
 Ye knowen suythe wel.

Thenne saide the justice, that gentil is ant fre,  
 Sire Simond Frysel, the kynges traytour hast thou be,  
 In water ant in londe that monie myhten se,  
 What sayst thou thareto, hou wolt thou quite the?

Do say.  
 So foul he him wiste,  
 Nede waron 'triste'  
 For to segge nay. 160

Ther he wes ydemed, so hit wes londes lawe,  
 For that he wes lordswyk, furst he wes to-drawe,  
 Upon a retheres hude forth he wes ytuht,  
 Sum while in ys time he wes a modi knyht,

In huerte.  
 Wickednesse ant sunne  
 Hit is lutel wunne  
 That maketh the body smerte.

For al is grete poer yet he wes ylaht,  
 Falsnesse ant swykedom al hit geth to naht, 170  
 Tho he wes in Scotlond lutel wes ys thoht  
 Of the harde jugement that him wes bysoht

In stounde.  
 He wes foursithe forswore

To the kyng ther bifore \*,  
 Ant that him brohte to grounde.

With feteres ant with gyves ichot he wes to-drowe,  
 From the tour of Londone, that monie myhte knowe,  
 In a curtel of burel a selkethe wyse,  
 Ant a gerland on ys heved of the newe guyse, 180  
     Thurh Cheepe ;  
     Moni mon of Engeland  
     For to se Symond  
     Thide[r]ward con lepe.

Tho he com to galewes furst he wes anhonge,  
 Al quic byheveded, thah him thohte longe,  
 Seththe he wes yopened, is boweles ybrend,  
 The heved to Londone-brugge wes send,

    To shonde :  
     So ich ever mote the, 190  
     Sumwhile wende he  
     Ther lutel to stonde.

He rideth thourh the sité, as y telle may,  
 With gomen, ant wyth solas, that wes here play,

\* Sir Simon was one of those whom K. Edward brought out of Scotland in 1296, when that kingdom was first subdued. He remained a close prisoner about eight months, and was then freed, on entering into the usual engagement with the conqueror, to which, however, it is certain he did not think proper to adhere ; esteeming it, perhaps, more sinful to keep such a forced obligation than to take it. Abercrombie, I. 552.

To Londone-brugge hee nome the way,  
 Moni wes the wyves chil that theron laketh a day,

Ant seide, Alas!

That he wes ibore,

Ant so villiche forlore,

So feir mon ase he was. 200

Nou stont the heved above the tubrugge,

Faste bi Waleis, soth forté sugge,

After socour of Scotlond longe he mowe pryde,

Ant after help of Fraunce: wet halt hit to lye,

Ich wene.

Betere him were in Scotlond,

With is ax in ys hond,

To pleyen othe grene.

Ant the body hongeth at the galewes faste,

With yrnene claspes longe to laste, 210

Forté wyte wel the body, ant Scottysh to garste,

Foure ant tuenti ther beoth to sothe ate laste,

By nyhte,

Yef eny were so hardi

The body to 'remuy'

Also to dyhte.

Were sire Robert the Bruytz ycome to this londe,

Ant the erl of Asseles\*, that harde is an honde,

\* The earl of Athol, John de Strathbogie. Attempting to escape by sea, he was driven back by a storm, taken, and conveyed to London, where he was tried, condemned, and, with circumstances of great barbarity, put to death, 7th &c. November, 1306. (M. West. 461.) Which proves the present ballad to have been composed between that time and the 7th of September preceding.

Alle the other pouraille, forsothe ich understonde,  
 Mihten be ful blythe ant thonke godes sonde, 220

Wyth ryhte ;  
 Thenne myhte uch mon  
 Bothe riden ant gon  
 In pes withoute vyhte.

The traytours of Scotland token hem to rede  
 The barouns of Engelond to brynge to dede,  
 Charles of Fraunce, so moni mon tolde,  
 With myht ant with streynthe hem helpe wolde,  
 His thonkes.

Tprot Scot, for thi strif, 230  
 Hang up thyn hachet ant thi knyf,  
 Whil him lasteth the lyf  
 With the longe shonkes.

\* \* \* The following curious particulars of the capture and execution of this sir Simon Fraser are transcribed from the fragment of an old chronicle in the British Museum, (MSS. Harl. 266.) written about the time of Henry the sixth; being much the same with that printed by Caxton.

Howe Robert the Brus was scomfited in bataille and howe Symond Frisell was slayn.

THE fryday next bifore [the] assumpcioun of oure lady king Edeward mette Robert the Brus bisides seynt Johns toun in Scotland, and with his companye, of whiche companye king Edewarde quelde sevene thowsand. When Robert the Brus saw this myschif and gan to flee and hovd hym that men myghte nought hym fynde: but sir Símond Frisell pursuede hym socore, so that he turnede ayen and abode bataille, for he was a worthy knyght and a bolde of body; and the Englishe men pursuede hym sore yn every syde, and quelde the stede that sir Symond Frisell rood uppon; and thei toke hym, and lad hym to the host. And sir Symond bigan for to flater and speke faire, and saide lordys I shalle yeve you iiij thousand marke of sylver, and myne

hors and harneys and alle my armure and vicome. Tho answerd Theobaude of Pevenes that was the kinges archer. Now god me so helpe hit is for nought thou spekste, for alle the gold of Engelonde I wold the noght lete gone, withoute commaundement of king Edeward : and tho was he lad to the king. And the king wolde not see hym but commaunded to lede hym away to his dome to London, on our ladyes even nativite ; and he was honge and drawe and his heede smyten of ; and honged ayene with chynes of iren oppon the galwes ; and his hede was sette oppon London-brug on a sper ; and ayens Cristemasse the body was brent : for enchesoun that the men that kepte the body by nyghte sawe menye devellis rampande with iren crokes, rennyngge uppon the gallews and horribliche turmented the body ; and meny that ham sawe anoon after thei deied for dred or woxen mad or sore sykenesse thei had.

The history of the great Scottish champion *Wallace* is better known.

The cruel and arbitrary treatment which these and other illustrious patriots experienced from the ambitious, but, happily, disappointed Edward, when treachery or the fortune of war had put them in his power, will for ever deprive his character of that admiration to which his courage and ability would otherwise have justly intitled it. The following animated imprecation, with which Wallace's military chaplain concludes his annals, is too remarkable not to deserve frequent notice, and, indeed, perpetual remembrance. " *Damnandus sit dies nativitatis Johannis de Monteith* \*, *et excipiat suum nomen ex libro vitæ ; maledictus sit in æternum inhumanus iste tyrannus, cum nobilis ille Scotorum ductor pro suæ virtutis præmio vitam æternam habebit, in secula seculorum. Amen.*" *Relationes Arnaldi Blair*, apud "*The acts and deeds of sir W. Wallace.*" Edinburgh, 1758.

\* The "*immanem proditorem*" of Wallace.

## VIII.

## A BALLAD ON THE SCOTISH WARS.

From a MS. in the Cotton library, Julius, A. V.

As y yod on ay mounday,  
 Bytwene Wyltinden and Walle,  
 ‘ Be ’ ane after brade waye,  
 Ay litel man y met withalle.

The leste that ever y sa, the [sothe] to say,  
 Oither in bour, oither in halle :  
 His robe was noither grene na gray,  
 Bot alle yt was of riche palle.

On me he cald, and bad me bide,  
 Wel stille y stode ay litel space, 10  
 Fra Lanchestre, the parke-syde,  
 Y cen he come, wel fair his pase.

He hailed me, with mikel pride,  
 Ic haved wel mykel ferly wat he was ;  
 I saide, Wel mote the bityde,  
 ‘ Thou ’ litel man, with large face !

I biheld that litel man,  
 By the stretes als we gon gae :  
 His berd was syde ay large span,  
 And ‘ gilded ’ \* als the fether of pae ; 20

\* Glided, *MS.*

His heved was wyte als any swan,  
 His hegehen war gret and grai,  
 Als so brues lange, wel i the can,  
 Merk it to five inches and mae.

Armés scort, forsothe i saye,  
 Ay span semed thaem to bee,  
 Handes brade, vytouten nay,  
 And fingeres lange he scheued me.

Ay stan he tok op thar it lay,  
 And castid forth that i mothe see, 30  
 Ay merk soot of large way  
 Bifor me strides he castid three:

Wel stille i stod, als did the stane,  
 To loke him on thouth me nouthe lange:  
 His robe was alle golde bigane,  
 Wel crustlik maked i understande.

Botones 'asure'\* everilk ane,  
 Fra his elbouthe ontil his hande  
 Elidelik man was he nane,  
 That in myn hert ich onderstande. 40

Til him, i sayde, ful sone onane,  
 Forthirmar, i wald him fraine:  
 'Gladli' wild i wit thi name,  
 And i wist wat me mouthe gaine:

\* Asurd, *MS.*



Thou ert so litel of flesse and bane,  
 And so mikel of mithe and mayne :—  
 War vones thou, litel man, at hame,  
 Wyt of their walde [i] ful faine.

“ Thoth i be litel and lith,  
 Am y noth wythouten wane, 50  
 Ferli frained thou wat hi hith,  
 That thou salt noth with my name.

My ‘woninge’-stede ful wel es ‘dyght,’  
 Nou, sone, thou salt se at hame.”  
 Til him, i sayde, for godes mith,  
 Lat me forth myn erand gane.

“ The thar noth of thin errand lette,  
 Thouth thou come ay stonde wit me,  
 Forther salt thou noth bisette  
 Bi miles twa, noyther bi three.” 60

Na linger durst i for him lette,  
 Bot forth ii fundid wyt that free,  
 Stintid us brok no beck,  
 Ferlick, me thouth, hu so mouth bee.

He vent forth, als ii you say,  
 In at ay yate, ii understande,  
 Intil ay yate, ‘wyouten’ nay,  
 It to se ‘thouth’ me nouth lange.

The bankers on the binkes lay,  
 And fair lordes sett ii 'fande,' 70  
 In ilke ay hirn ii herd ay lay,  
 And levedys, south, me loude sange.

Lithé, bothé yonge and alde,  
 Of ay worde ii wil you saye,  
 Ay litel tale that me was tald  
 Erli on ay wedenesdaye :

A mody barn, that was ful bald,  
 My frend, that ii frained aye,  
 Al my yering he me tald,  
 And yatid me, als we went bi waye. 80

"Miri man, that es so wythe,  
 Of ay thinge gif me answere,  
 For him that mensked man wyt mith,  
 Wat sal worth of this were ?

And eke our folke, hou sal thai fare,  
 That at ere bi-northen nou ?  
 Sal thai have any contré thare ?  
 'Or' \* wether hande sal have the prou ?"

Ay Toupe, he sayde, es redy thare,  
 Agayn him yitt es nane that don, 90  
 On yonde-alf Humbre es ay Bare,  
 Be he sped sal sides son ;

\* Other, *MS.*

Bi he have sped, als sal thai spede,  
 And redi gatés on to fare,  
 And man be mensked for his mede,  
 And stable stat for evermare.

And, sethen thou fraines, ii wille the say,  
 And sette the state in stabilitè,  
 Rymittes recth, als thou may,  
 For ay skill ii tell it thee ; 100

And warn em wel, wytouten nay,  
 A tyme bifor the Trinitè,  
 Thare sal deye, on ay day,  
 A folke on feld ful fa sal flee.

Wa so flees sal duelle in care,  
 For thare may na man timé tyde,  
 A Toupe sal stande agayn ay Bare,  
 He es ful bald, him dar habide.

“ Miri man, ii pray thee, yif thou maye,  
 Yif that thi wille ware, 110  
 Bathe thair names thou me saye,  
 Wat hate the Toupe, and wat the Bare?”

Ant he sayde, [with]outen nay,  
 Hate the tane, trou thou my lare,  
 Ar thou may that other say,  
 That sal be falden wyt that fare.

The wiser es, ii noth of that.

“ Miri man, wat may this be?”

“ Nou have ii sayde the, wat thai hat,

Forther, wites thou noth for me. 120

So lange the Lebard loves the layke,

‘ Wat hi ’ on sped your spel ye spille,

And lates the Lion have his raike,

Wit werke in ‘ Werdale,’ als he wille.

The Bare es bonden hard in baite,

Wit folés that wil folies fille,

The Toupe in toune your werkes wayte,

To bald his folke he bidés stille.

Bide wa bide, he sal habide,

Thar folés for thair falsé fare, 130

Fa fra feld I cen sal ryde,

The land sal levé wit the Bare.”

“ Forthermar, ii wille the frein,

My frend, yif that thi wille ware,

Sal ii telle it forthe or layn,

Or thou sal telle me any mare.”

“ Rymith ‘ recth,’ als ii the sayn,

Als sal thou redi find it thare,

And fel be of thi tithinges fain,

Wen livés ligger on holtés hare. 140

Bot, oute sal ride a chivauchè,  
Wit febel fare on a nith,  
So falsé sal thaire waytés be,  
That deye sal many a doug[h]ty knyth.

Knyth and scoyer bathe sal deye,  
That other moren biyond ma,  
Thouche thay be never so sleeche,  
Wyt schrogen suet fra livés ga.

The Bare es bone to tyne the tour,  
Bot bald sal be of bataille swa, 150  
Wa bidés him on hard and herch,  
That day sal deye, and duelle in wa.

Wyt folés sal the feld be leest,  
A poeple liest fol neghe biside,  
Sal come out of the souther-west,  
Wyt reken routés ful on ride.

Thar sal the folés dreeg is paine,  
And folie, for his falsé fare,  
Lie opon the feld slayne,  
And lose his live for evermare. 160

And wyt sal winne the lande agayn,  
A day fra Clide onto Clare,  
And fa be of thair frendés fain,  
And tourés stande, als that did are ;

And simple men, that wil have dede,  
 Thar sal thai ful redi finde,  
 That mester affe to wyne theem mede,  
 For fauté sal noth stande bihinde.

‘ The’ Bare es brouth out of his denne,  
 The Lepard haldés hym so lange, 170  
 That we wate never swa ne swenne,  
 Na wilk of them sal weld the land.

Amange ay hondre, no fynd ii tenne,  
 That thai ne fald als a wande.  
 By reson may thou knaw and kenne,  
 That be ful fele has wroth alle wrang.

Wrangwis werkés sul men se  
 Be flemed for thair fals willes,  
 And after them sal with ay be,  
 And out em out of alle thair wyles.” 180

“ Miri man, ‘ ii the beseke ’\*  
 Of a tything telle me mar :  
 Hou hendés alle ys folke to-yere,  
 Sulke qualme no, saith ii, never ar.

So comeli ‘ som ’ men deyen here,  
 Pover na riche es nane to spare.  
 Lithé, he sayd, ii sal the ler[e],  
 Have thou no ferly of that fare.

\* Beseke the yif that the wille ware, *MS.*



Fra twa to threë the lande es liest,  
 Bot, nameli, sal ic fur the twa,  
 The Lion thare sal fare to fecht  
 The landé til the Bare sal ga.

Wel 'gladli' wald ii understande,  
 To telle theem hou so 'most it' be,  
 Welke of theem 'sal' weld the lande,  
 For wel thou spake of the three. 220

A T bisode an L ii 'fande,'  
 Chese thi selven, seg[h]e and see,  
 An Ed the thred, wyt hope and hande,  
 [Thai schullen bathe] the baillifs bee.

Bot nou of theem [ii sal] the lede\*,  
 That es so bald that dar habide,  
 That theem sal reu, yif ii can rede,  
 On ay friday, on est-half Clide.

For, wel thai wen hour lande to winne,  
 To fele that [thai] may finde biforin, 230  
 Thai sal 'be' blenked ar thai blinne,  
 'Thai' folis that haves ben forthorin.

Many be dampned to 'deye' tharinne,  
 That riden hech, wyt hond and horin,  
 Wen yonge sal falle, for ald synne,  
 And lose the lyf, and be forthorin.

\* Hat loves, MS.



Wrangé werkés wil away  
It sal be als god havés sette,  
Of thair biginnyng can ii say,  
Sal na frend of other ' rette.'

240

' Doughty ' sal ' deyé ' on the feld,  
To wyt theem be never so wa,  
And Falsed, under hallés held,  
In frith sul men the folés ta.

Leauté men havés ben ful seld,  
It sal be sette wyt mirthés ma,  
And marchant[s] have the werld to weld,  
And ' chapmen '\* wyt thair packés ga.

And, than, sal Reson raike and ride,  
And ' Wisdomé ' beware es best,  
And Leauté sal gar leal habide,  
And, sithen, sal hosbond-men af rest.

250

\* Capman, *MS.*

## IX.

## A BALLAD AGAINST THE FRENCH,

—“whose officers,” it seems, “extorting too much from the inhabitants of Bruges, in Flanders, were murdered there; and the French kings power, commanded by the count ‘de’ St. Pol, discomfited: after which K. Philip the Fair sending another mighty army, under the conduct of the count d’Artois, against these Flemings; he was killed, and the French were almost all cutt to pieces. The later of these battels was stricken on wednesday the 7th of July, 1301.” WANLEY.

From the MS. in the Harleian Library, No. 2253.

LUSTNETH, lordinges, bothe yonge ant olde,  
 Of the Freynssh men that were so proude and bolde,  
 Hou the Flemmyssh men bohten hem ant solde,  
                                 Upon a wednesday.  
 Betere hem were at home in huere londe  
 Then forté seche Flemmyssh by the see stronde,  
 Whare rourh moni Frensh wyf wryngeth hire honde,  
                                 Ant singeth weylaway.

The kyng of Fraunce mad statuz newe,  
 In the lond of Flaundres among false ant trewe,   10  
 That the comun of Bruges ful sore con arewe,  
                                 And seiden amonges hem,  
 Gedere we us togedere hardilyche at ene,  
 Take we the bailifs bi tuenty ant by tene,  
 Clappe we of the hevedes anonen o the grene,  
                                 Ant caste we y the fen.

The webbes ant the fullaris assembleden hem alle,  
 Ant makeden huere consail in huere commune halle,  
 Token Peter Conyng huere kyng to calle,

Ant beo huere cheventeyn, 20

Hue nomen huere rouncyns out of the stalle,  
 Ant closeden the toun withinne the walle,  
 Sixti baylies ant ten hue maden adoun falle,

Ant moni an other sweyn.

Tho wolde the baylies that were come from Fraunce,  
 Dryve the Flemissh that made the destaunce,  
 Hue turnden hem ayeynes with suerd ant with launce,

Stronge men ant lyht.

Y telle ou for sothe, for al huere bobaunce,  
 Ne for the avowerie of the kyng of Fraunce, 30  
 Tuenti score ant fyve haden ther meschaunce,

By day ant eke by nyht.

Sire Jakes de Seint Poul, yherde 'hou' hit was,  
 Sixtene hundred of horsmen asembled o the gras,  
 He wende toward Bruges *pas pur pas*,

With swithe gret mounde.

The Flemmyssh yherden telle the cas,  
 Agynneth to clynken huere basyns of bras,  
 Ant al hem to dryven ase ston doth the glas,

Ant fellen hem to grounde. 40

Sixtene hundred of horsmen hede ther here fyn,  
 Hue leyghen y the stretes ystyked ase swyn,  
 Ther hue loren huere stedes ant mony rouncyn,

Thourh huere ounne prude.

Sire Jakes ascapede, by a coynte gyn,  
Out at one posterne ther me solde wyn,  
Out of the fyhte hom to ys yn,  
In wel muchele drede.

Tho the kyng of Fraunce yherde this anon,  
Assemblede he is doussé-pers everuchon, 50  
The proude eorl of Artoys ant other mony on,  
To come to Paris.

The barouns of Fraunce thider conne gon,  
 Into the paleis that paved is with ston,  
 To jugge the Flemmissh to bernen ant to slon,  
 Thourh the flour de lis.

Thenne seide kyng Phelip, lustneth nou to me,  
Myn eorles ant my barouns gentil ant fre, —  
Goth faccheth me the traytours ybounde to my kne ;  
Hastiffliche ant blyve. 60

Tho suor the eorl of Seint Poul, *par la goule de*,  
We shule facche the rybaus wher thi wille be,  
Ant drawn hem [with] wilde hors out of the countrè,  
By thousandes fyve.

Sire Rauf Devel, sayth the eorl of Boloyne,  
*Nus ne lerrum en ure, chanoun ne moyne,*  
Wende we forth anon ritht withoute eny assoygne,  
Ne no lyves man ;  
We shule flo the Conyng, ant make roste is loyne,  
The word shal springen of him into Coloyne,      70  
So hit shal to Acres ant into Sesoyne,  
Ant maken him ful wan.



For hem mot huere kyng other knyhtes calle,  
 Other stedes taken out of huere stalle,  
 Ther hi habbeth dronke bittre then the galle,  
                                 Upon the drue londe.

When the kyng of Fraunce yherde this tydyng,  
 He smot doun is heved, is honden gon he wryng,  
 Thourhout al Fraunce the word bygon to spryng,  
                                 Who wes huem tho.

Muche wes the sorewe ant the wepinge  
 That wes in al Fraunce among olde ant yynge,   110  
 The mest part of the lond bygon forté syng  
                                 “ Alas ! ant weylawo ! ”

Away, thou yunge pope, whet shal the to rede,  
 Thou hast lore thin cardinals at thi mest nede,  
 Ne keverest thou hem nevere for noneskunnes mede,  
                                 Forsothe y the telle.

Do the forth to Rome, to amende thi misdede,  
 Bide gode halewen, hue lete the betere spede,  
 Bote thou worche wysloker, thou losest lond ant lede,  
                                 The coroune wel the felle.   120

Alas ! thou seli Fraunce ! for the may thunche shome  
 That ane fewe fullaris maketh ou so tome,  
 Sixti thousent on a day hue maden fot-lome,  
                                 With eorl ant knyht.

Herof habbeth the Flemyssh suithe god game,  
 Ant suereth by seint Omer ant eke bi seint Jame,  
 Yef hy ther more cometh, hit falleth huem to shame  
                                 With huem forté fyht.

I telle ou for sothe, the bataille thus bigon  
 Bituene Fraunce ant Flaundres, hou hue weren fon,  
 Vor Vrenshe the eorl of Flaundres in prison heden ydon,

With tresoun untrewē.

Ye[f] the prince of Walis his lyf habbé mote,  
 Hit falleth the kyng of Fraunce bittrore then the sote,  
 Bote he the rathere therof welle do bote,

Wel sore hit shal hym rewe.

# X.

## A SONG IN PRAISE OF THE AUTHORS MISTRESS.

From the same MS.

BYTUENE Mersh ant Averil,  
 When spray biginneth to springe,  
 The lutel foul hath hire wyl  
 On hyre lud to synge;  
 Ich libbe in lovelonginge  
 For semlokest of alle thynges,  
 He may me blisse bringe,  
 Icham in hire banndoun.  
 An hendy hāp ichabbe yhent,  
 Ichot from hevene it is me sent,  
 From alle wymmen mi love is lent,  
 Ant lyht on Alysoun.

On hen hire her is fayr ynoh,  
Hire browe broune, hire eghe blake ;  
With lossum chere he on me loh ;  
With middel smal ant wel ymak :  
Bote he me wolle to hire take,  
Forté buen hire owen make,  
Longe to lyven ichulle forsake,  
And, feye, fallen adoun.  
An hendy hap, &c.

20

Nihtes when y wende ant wake,  
Forthi myn wonges waxeth won,  
Levedi, al for thine sake  
Longinge is ylent me on.  
In world nis non so wyter mon,  
That al hire bounté telle con :  
Hire swyre is whittore then the swon,  
Ant feyrest may in toune.  
An hendy hap, &c.

30

Icham, for wowing, al forwake,  
Wery so water in wore ;  
Lest eny reve me my make,  
Ychal be y-yyrned yore.  
Betere is tholien whyle sore  
Then mournen evermore,  
Geynest undergore,  
Herkne to my roun.  
An hendi, &c.



## XI.

## A LOVE SONG,

—“ whose author describes his beautiful, but unrelenting mistress.”

From the same MS.

Ichot a burde in boure bryht,  
That fully semly is on syht,  
Mensful maiden of myht,

Feir ant fre to fonde.

In al this wurhliche won,  
A burde of blod ant of bon  
Never yete ynuste non

Lussomore in londe.

Blow, northerne wynd!

‘ Send ’ thou me my suetyng! 10

Blow, northerne wynd! blou, blou, blou!

With lokkes leffliche ant longe,  
With frount ant face feir to ‘ fonge,’  
With murthes monie mote heo monge,

That brid so breme in boure.

With lossom eye grete ant gode,  
With browen blysfol underhode,  
He that reste him on the rode,

That leflych lyf honoure.

[Blou, &c.]

Hire lure lumes liht,  
Ase a launterne a-nyht,  
Hire bleo blykyeth so bryht,  
    So feyr heo is ant fyn.  
A suetly suyre heo hath to holde,  
With armes shuldre ase mon wolde,  
Ant fyngres feyre forté folde,  
    God wolde hue were myn !  
[Blou, &c.]

Middel heo hath menskful smal,  
Hire loveliche chere as cristal ;  
Theghes, legges, fet ant al,  
Ywraht wes of the beste.  
A lussum ledy lasteles,  
That sweting is ant ever wes,  
A betere burde never nes.  
Yheryed with the heste.  
[Blou, &c.]

Heo is dereworthe in day,  
Graciouse, stout ant gay,  
Gentil, jolyf, so the jay,  
Worhliche when heo waketh.  
Maiden murgest of mouth,  
Bi est, by west, by north ant south,  
Ther nis ficle ne crouth  
That such murthes maketh.  
[Blou, &c.]

Heo is coral of godnesse,  
 Heo is rubie of ryhtfulnesse,  
 Heo is cristal of clairnesse, 50  
     Ant baner of bealtè.  
 Heo is lilie of largesse,  
 Heo is parvenke of prouesse,  
 Heo is solsecle of suetnesse,  
     Ant ledy of lealtè.  
 [Blou, &c.]

To love that leffich is in londe,  
 Ytolde him, as ych understonde,  
 Hou this hende hath hent in honde, 60  
     On huerte that myn wes :  
 Ant hire knyhtes me han so soht,  
 Sykyng, sorewyng, ant thoht,  
 Tho thre me han in bale broht,  
     Ayeyn the poer of pees.  
 [Blou, &c.]

To love y putte pleyntes mo,  
 Hou sykyng me hath siwed so,  
 Ant, eke, thoht me thrat to slo,  
     With maistry yef he myhte.  
 Ant serewe sore in balful bende, 70  
 That he wolde, for this hende,  
 Me lede to my lyves ende,  
     Unlahfulliche in lyhte.  
 [Blou, &c.]

Hire love me lustnede uch word,  
Ant beh him to me over bord,  
Ant bed me hente that hord,

Of myne huérte hele ;

Ant bisecheth that swete ant swote,  
Er then thou falle, ase fen of fote,  
That heo with the wolfe of bote

80

Dereworthliche dele.

[Blou, &c.]

For hire love y carke ant care,  
For hire love y droupne ant dare,  
For hire love my blisse is bare,

Ant al ich waxe won.

For hire love in slep yslake,  
For hire love al nyht ich wake,  
For hire love mournyng y make

90

More then eny mon.

[Blou, &c.]

## XII.

## A SONG ON THE AUTHORS MISTRESS,

—"whom he admires as the fairest maid bituene Lyncolne ant  
Lyndeseye, Norhampton ant Lounde (i. e. London)."

From the same MS.

WHEN the nyhtegale singes the wodes waxen grene,  
Lef ant gras ant blosme springes in Averyl y wene,  
Ant love is to myn herte gon with one spere so kene,  
Nyht ant day my blod hit drynkes, myn herte deth  
me tene.

Ich have loved al this yer that y may love na more,  
Ich have siked moni syk lemmon for thin ore,  
Me nis love never the ner, ant that me reweth sore,  
Suete lemmon, thench on me, ich have loved the yore.

Suete lemmon, y preye the of love one speche,  
Whil y lyve in world so wyde other nulle y seche ; 10  
With thy love, my suete leof, mi blis thou mihtes eche,  
A suete cos of thy mouth mihte be my leche.

Suete lemmon, y preye the of a love bene,  
Yef thou me lovest ase men says, lemmon, as y wene ;  
Ant yef hit thi wille be thou loke that hit be sene,  
So muchel y thenke upon the that al ywaxe grene.

Bituene Lyncolne ant Lyndesey, Norhamptoun ant  
Lounde,

Ne wot y non so fayr a may as y go 'sore' ybounde :  
Sute lemmon, y preye the thou lovie me a stounde,  
I wole mone my song *els to al that ys on grounde.* 20

## XIII.

A SONG SETTING FORTH THE GOOD EFFECTS OF  
THE SPRING.

From the same MS.

LENTEN ys come with love to toune,  
With blosmen ant with briddes rounde,  
That al this blisse bryngeth ;  
Dayeseyes in this dales,  
Notes suete of nyhtegales,  
Uch foul song singeth.

The threstelcoc him threteth oo,  
Away is huere wynter wo,  
When woderove springeth ;  
This foules singeth ferly fele, 10  
Ant wlyteth on huere wynter wele,  
That al the wode ryngeth.

The rose rayleth hire rode,  
The leues on the lyhte wode,  
Waxen al with wille ;

[V. 20. on wham that hit ys on ylong. MS.]

The mone mandeth hire bleo,  
The lilie is lossom to seo,  
The fenyl ant the fille.

Wowes this wilde drakes,  
Miles murgeth huere makes, 20  
Ase strem that striketh stille ;  
Mody meneth, so doh mo,  
Ichot ycham on of tho,  
For love that likes ille.

The mone mandeth hire lyht,  
So doth the semly sonne bryht,  
When briddes singeth breme ;  
Deawes donketh the dounes,  
Deores with huere derne rounes,  
Domes forté deme. 30

Wormes woweth under cloude,  
Wymmen waxeth wounder proude,  
So wel hit wol hem seme.  
Yef me shal wonte wille of on,  
This wunne weole y wole forgon,  
Ant wyht in wode be fleme.

## XIV.

"A DITTY UPON THE UNCERTAINTY OF THIS  
LIFE AND THE APPROACH OF DEATH."

From the same MS.

WYNTER wakeneth al my care ;  
Nou this leves waxeth bare.  
Ofte y sike ant mourne sare,  
When hit cometh in my thoht,  
Of this worldes joie, hou hit geth al to noht.

Nou hit is, ant nou hit nys,  
Also hit ner nere, y wys :  
That moni mon seith, soth hit ys,  
Al goth bote godes wille :  
Alle we shule deye thah us like ylle.

All that gren me graueth grene ;  
Nou hit faleweth albydene :  
Jhesu help, that hit be sene,  
Ant shild us from helle !  
For ynot whider y shal, ne hou longe her duelle.



## XV.

## ADVICE TO THE FAIR SEX.

[From the same MS.]

IN May hit murgeth when hit dawes,  
In dounes with this dueres plawes,  
Ant lef is lyht on lynde ;  
Blosmes bredeth on the bowes,  
Al this wylde wyhtes wowes,  
So wel ych underfynde.

Ynot non so freoh flour,  
Ase ledies that beth bryght in bour,  
    With love who mihte hem bynde ;  
So worly wymmen are by west,                 10  
One of hem ich herie best  
    From Irlond into Ynde.

Wymmen were the beste thing  
That shup oure heghe hevene kyng,  
Yef feole false nere ;  
Heo beoth to rad upon huere red,  
To love ther me hem lastes bed,  
When heo shule fenge fere.

Lut in londe are to leve,  
Thah me hem trewe trouthe yeve, 20  
For trecherie to yere ;

When trechour hath is trouth yplyht,  
By swyken he hath that suete wyht,  
Thah he hire othes swere.

Wymmon war the with the swyke,  
That feir ant freoly ys to fyke,  
Ys fare is o to founde ;  
So wyde in world ys huere won,  
In uch a toune untrewre is on,  
From Leycestre to Lounde.

30

Of treuthe nis the trechour noht,  
Bote he habbe is wille ywroht,  
At stevenyng umbestounde.  
Ah ! feyre levedies, be ou war  
To late cometh the yeyn char,  
When love ou hath ybounde.

Wymmen bueth so feyr on hewe,  
Ne trow y none that nere trewe,  
Yef trechour hem ne tahte.

Ah ! feyre thinges, freoly bore,  
When me[n] ou woweth beth war bifore,  
Whuch is worldes ahte.

40

Al to late is seind ayeyn,  
When the ledy liht byleyn,  
Ant lyveth by that he hahte,  
Ah ! wolde Lylie leor in lyn,  
Yhere levely lores myn,  
With selthe we weren sahte.

## XVI.

## A SONG UPON THE MAN IN THE MOON.

We are here presented, by the same MS. with the idea our ancestors entertained of an imaginary being, the subject of perhaps one of the most ancient as well as one of the most popular superstitious in the world. He is represented leaning upon a fork, on which he carries a bush of thorn, because it was for "pycchynde stake" on a sunday that he is reported to have been thus confined\*. There cannot be a doubt that the following is the original story, however the Moon became connected with it.

¶ And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath-day.

And they that found him gathering sticks, brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.

And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.

And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses. *Numbers, xv. 32, et seq.*

To have a care "Lest the chorle may fall out of the moone," appears from Chaucers *Troilus* to have been a proverbial expression in his time.

\* In the *Midsummer Nights Dream*, Peter Quince, the carpenter, in arranging his *dramatis personæ* for the play before the duke, directs that—"One must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say, he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moon-shine." Which we afterwards find done. "All that I have to say," concludes the performer of this strange part, "is, to tell you, that the lantern is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog:" and such a character appears to have been familiar to the old English stage. Vide also *Tempest*, Act II. Scene ii.

Mon, in the mone, stond ant streit,  
 On is bot-forke is burthen he bereth :  
 Hit is muche wonder that he na down slyt,  
 For doute leste he valle he shoddreth ant shereth :  
 When the forst freseth muche chele he byd,  
 The thornes beth kene is hattren to-tereth ;  
 Nis no wyttht in the world that wot wen he syt,  
 Ne, bote hit bue the hegge, whet wedes he wereth.

Whider trowe this mon ha the wey take,  
 He hath set is o fot is other to foren, 10  
 For non hithte that he hath ne syttht me hym ner shake,  
 He is the sloweste mon that ever wes yboren.  
 Wher he were o the feld pycchynde stake,  
 For hope of ys thornes to dutten is doren,  
 He mot myd is twybyl other trous make,  
 Other al is dayes werk ther were yloren.

This ilke mon upon heh whener he were,  
 Wher he were y the Mone boren ant yfed.  
 He leneth on is forke ase a grey frere,  
 This crokede caynard sore he is adred. 20  
 Hit is mony day go that he was here,  
 Ichot of is ernde he nath nout ysped ;  
 He hath hewe sumwher a burthen of brere,  
 Tharefore sum hayward hath taken ys wed.

“ Yef thy wed ys ytake, bring hom the trous,  
 Sete forth thyn other fot, sryd over sty ;  
 We shule preye the haywart hom to ur hous,  
 Ant maken hym at heyse for the maystry ;

Drynke to hym deorly of fol god bous,  
Ant oure dame Douse shal sitten hym by, 30

When that he is dronke ase a dreynt mous,  
Thenne we schule borewe the wed ate bayly."

This mon hereth me nout, thah ich to hym crye

Ichot the cherl is def, the del hym to-drawe!

Thah ic yeghe upon heth nulle nout hye,

The lostlase ladde con nout o lawe.

Hupe forth, Hubert! hosede pye,

Ichot thart amarstled in to the mawe;

Thah me teone with hym that myn teh mye,

The cherld nul nout adoun er the day dawe.

---

## XVII.

### A SONG,

—"made A. D. 1308, in praise of the valiant knight Sir Piers de Birmingham, who while he lived was a scourge to the Irish, and died A. D. 1288." From a MS. in the Harleian library (No. 913) of the same age. The editor confesses his inability to reconcile the title and second stanza with the following passage in the "*Annals of Ireland*," in which this valiant knight is frequently mentioned, but never till after the year 1288:

"MCCCVIII. On the second of the ides of April [i. e. the 14th day of that month] died the lord Peter de Birmingham, a noble champion against the Irish."

SITH Gabriel gan grete

Ure ledi Mari swete

That godde wold in hir lighte,

A thousand yer hit isse,  
Thre hundred ful i wisse,  
Ant over yeris eighte.

Than of the eight yere  
Tak twies ten ifere  
That wol be tuenti fulle ;  
Apan the tuenti dai  
Of Averil bifer Mai,  
So Deth us gan to pulle.

10

He pullid us of on,  
Al Irlond makith mon  
Englelonck as welle ;  
Ful wel ye witte his nam,  
Sir Pers the Brimingham,  
Non nede hit is to telle.

His nam hit was ant isse,  
Y sigge you ful, i wisse,  
That uppe ssal arise :  
In felle, flesse ant bone,  
A better knight nas none,  
No none of more prise.

20

Noble werrure he was,  
A gode castel in place,  
On stede ther he wold ride,  
With his sper ant scheld,  
In hard wodde ant feld,  
No thef him durst abide.

30

Do thenchith al in him,  
With weepin who wol win,  
Hou gode he was to nede.  
In batail stif to stond,  
I wis is pere nas nond,  
Alas he sold be dede !

Al Englis men that beth  
Sore mow wep is deth,  
That such a knight ssold falle ;  
Thos knightis everich one  
Of him mai mak mone,  
As pervink of ham alle. 40

Pervink he might be,  
Ant that for thinges thre,  
He ussid oft ant lome,  
That was one of the best,  
He ne leet no thef hav rest,  
In no stid ther he come.

Another thing also,  
To Yrismen he was fo,  
That wel wide whare ;  
Ever he rode aboute,  
With streinth to hunt ham ute,  
As hunter doth the hare. 50

For whan hi wend best  
In wildernis hav rest,  
That no man ssold ham see,

Than he wold drive a quest  
Anon to har nest,  
In stid ther hi wold be.

60

Of slep he wold ham wak,  
For ferdnis he wold quak,  
Ant fond to sculk awai;  
For the hire of har bedde,  
He tok har hevid to wedde,  
Ant so he taght ham plai.

Thos Yrismen of the lond  
Hi swor ant tok an hond  
The Englis men to trai;  
Ant seid hi wold quelle,  
As fale as ic you telle,  
Al apon o dai.

70

The erl of Ulvester,  
Sire Emond the Botiler,  
Sire Jon le Fiz Tomas,  
Algate al bi name,  
Sire Pers the Briminghame,  
This was har compas.

This compasment com ute  
Fram knight to knight abute,  
Hit nas noght lang ihidde;  
Thos knightis preid al,  
That meschans most ham fal,  
Yif scape hi ssold ther midde.

80



Ant swor bi godis name  
 To yild the cuntré pane,  
     Whan hi might com to ;  
 Ant that withute lette  
 To certain dai isette,  
     This thing ssold be do. 90

Lang er this dai was com  
 Hit was foryit with som,  
     That neisse beth to nede ;  
 Alas ! what ssold hi ibor  
 Throgh ham this lond is ilor  
     To spille ale ant bred.

Sire Pers the Brimingham,  
 On ernist ant again,  
     This dai was is thocht ;  
 He thocht ordres to mak, 100  
 What time he might ham tak,  
     Of travail nas him noght.

O Konwir that was king  
 His ketherin he gan bring,  
     The maister heet Gilboie ;  
 Right at the Trinitè,  
 Whan hodes sold best be,  
     To Pers in Totomoye :

Ant yite of other stoore  
 Com Ethe Mac Mal More, 110  
     Ant other fale bi name ;

Sire Pers lokid ute,  
He seei such a rut  
Him thoght hit nas no game.

Sir Pers ses ham com,  
He receivid al ant som,  
Noght on iwernd nas ;  
Sith hoodis he let mak,  
Noht on nas forsak,  
Bot al he did ham grace.

120

Save o wrech that ther was,  
He cuthe noght red in place,  
' Ne ' sing whar he com ;  
He was of Caym is kinne,  
Ant he refusid him,  
He wend unhodid hom.

He that this sang let mak,  
For sir Persis sake,  
Wel wid hath igo ;  
Wid whar isoght,  
Ant god pardon iboght,  
Two hundrid daies ant mo.

130

## XVIII.

## “ AYEYN MI WILLE I TAKE MI LEVE.”

From an immense folio in the Bodleian library, known by the title of MS. Vernon, consisting of between four and five hundred large parchment leaves, and containing a variety of religious and other poems, in a character which the editor conjectured, on looking over it, to be of the fourteenth century (i. e. of the reign of Edward III. or Richard II.). The song is at folio 404.

Now burnés, buirdés, bolde and blythe  
 To blessen ow her nou am I bounde,  
 I thonke you alle a thousand sithe,  
 And prei god save you hol and sounde ;  
 Wherever ye go, on gras or grounde,  
 He ow governe, withouten greve,  
 For frendschipe that I here have founde,  
 Ayeyn mi wille I take mi leve.

For frendschipe and for yiftes goode,  
 For mete and drinke so gret plentè  
 That lord that raught was on the roode  
 He kepe thi comeli cumpaynè ;  
 On see or lond, wher that ye be,  
 He governe ow withouten greve ;  
 So good disport ye han mad me,  
 Ayein mi wille I take my leve.

Ayein mi wille althaug I wende,  
 I may not alwey dwellen here,  
 For everi thing schal have an ende,  
 And frendés are not ay ifere. 20  
 Be we never so lef and dere,  
 Out of this world al schul we meve,  
 And, whon we buske unto ur bere,  
 Ayeyn' ur wille we take ur leve.

And wende we schulle, I wot never whenne  
 Ne whoderward, that we schul fare,  
 But endeles blisse, or ay to brenne,  
 To everi mon is yarked yare ;  
 Forthi, I rede, uch mon be ware,  
 And lete ur werk ur wordés preve, 30  
 So that no sunne ur soule forfare,  
 Whon that ur lyf hath taken his leve.

Whon that ur lyf his leve hath lauht,  
 Ur bodi lith bounden bi the wowe,  
 Ur riches alle from us ben raft,  
 In clottes colde ur cors is throwe.  
 Wher are thi frendes? ho wol the knowe?  
 Let seo ho wol thi soule releve ;  
 I rede the, mon, ar thow ly lowe,  
 Beo redi ay to take thi leve. 40

Be redi ay, whatever bifalle,  
 Al sodeynli lest thou be kiht ;  
 Thou wost never whonne thi lord wol calle,  
 Loke that thi laumpe beo brennynge briht\* :

\* An allusion to S. Matthew, c. 25.

For, leve me wel, but thou have liht,  
Riht foule thi lord wol the reprove,  
And fleme the fer out of his siht,  
For al to late thou toke thi leve.

Now god that was in Bethleem bore,  
He yive us grace to serve him so, 50  
That we may come his face tofore,  
Out of this world whon we schul go :  
And for to amende that we misdo,  
In clei or that we clynge and cleve ;  
And mak us evene with frend and fo,  
And in good tyme to take ur leve.

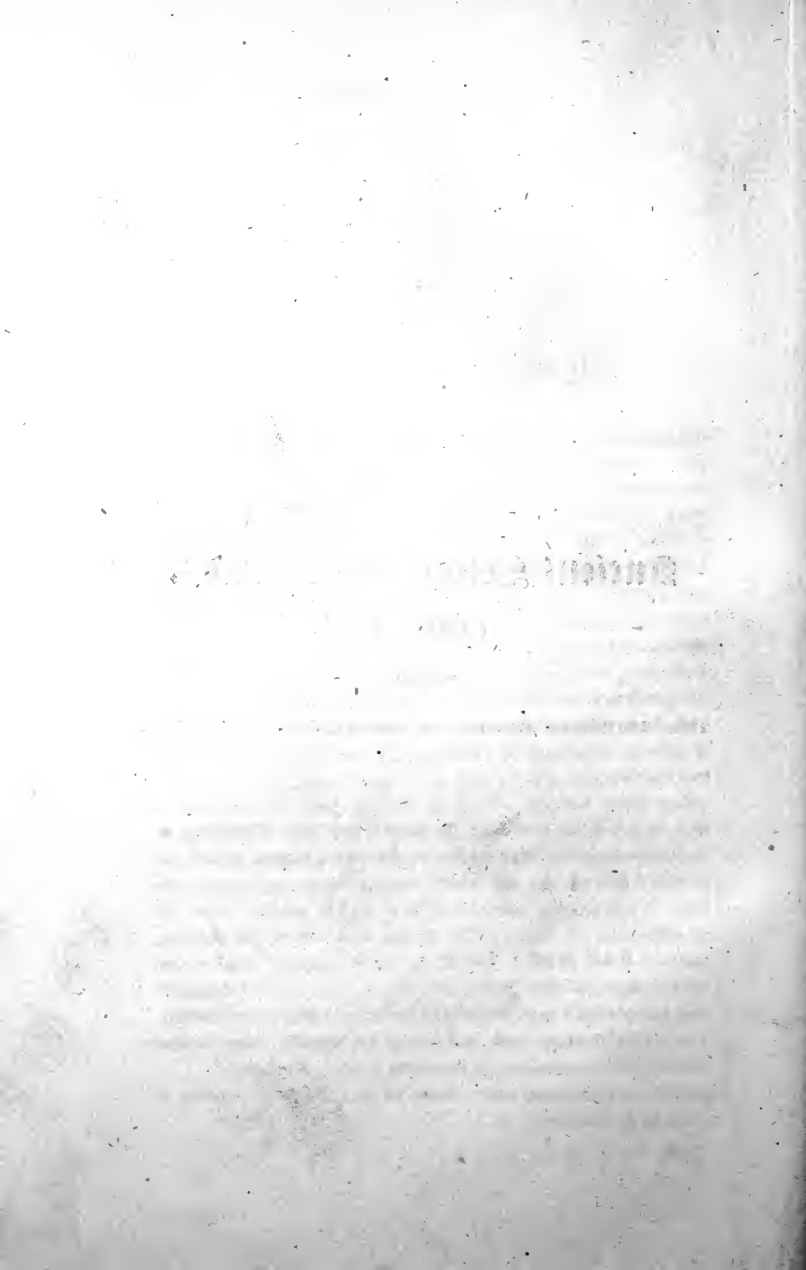
Nou haveth good dai, gode men alle,  
Haveth good day, yonge and olde,  
Haveth good day, both grete and smalle,  
And graunt merci a thousand folde. 60  
Yif ever I mighte, ful fayn I wolde,  
Don ought that weore unto you leve :  
Crist kepe ow out of cares colde !  
For nou is tyme to take my leve.

# **Ancient Songs and Ballads.**

**CLASS II.**

**COMPRISING**

**THE REIGNS OF HENRY IV. HENRY V. AND HENRY VI.**



## I.

### THE DEATH OF ROBIN LYTH.

This singularly curious relic is given from a small quarto MS. in the Sloane library in the Museum (No. 2593.), consisting of a pretty considerable number of poetical pieces, "some pious, some the contrary," in a hand which appears to be nearly, if not quite, as old as the time of Henry V. But from the uncommon rudeness of the following extract, which is totally dissimilar in point of language and manner to any thing the editor has hitherto met with, one may safely venture to pronounce it at least of equal date with the commencement of the preceding reign. Who or what this Robin Lyth was, does not, otherwise than by this little performance, composed, it should seem, to commemorate the manner of his death, and of the revenge taken for it, any where appear. That he was a native or inhabitant of Yorkshire is, indeed, highly probable, for two reasons: the first is, that a few miles north of Whitby is a village called *LYTHE*, whence he may be reasonably supposed to have acquired his surname: the second, that near Flamborough, in Holderness, is a large cavern in the rocks, subject, at present, to the influx of the sea, which, among the country people, retains to this day the name of *ROBIN LYTH HOLE*; from the circumstance, no doubt, of its having been one of his skulking places. Robin Hood, a hero of the same occupation, had several such in those and other parts: and, indeed, it is not very improbable that our hero had been formerly in the suite of that gallant robber, and, on his masters death, had set up for himself. See a further account of the above cave in Pennants *Tour in Scotland*.

*Gandalin*, an uncommon name, occurs in the old Spanish romance of *Amadis de Gaul*.



I HERDE a carpyng of a clerk,  
 Al at yone wodés ende,  
 Of gode Robyn and Gandeleyn,  
 Was ther non other ' thyngge.'  
 Robyn Lyth in grene wode bowndyn.

Stronge thevys wern tho chylderin non,  
 But bowmen gode and hende ;  
 He wentyn to wode to getyn hem fleych,  
 If god wold it hem sende.

[Robyn, &c.]

10

Al day wentyn tho chylderin too,  
 And fleych fowndyn he non,  
 Til it wer ageyn evyn,  
 The chylderin wold gon hom.

[Robyn, &c.]

Half a honderid of fat falyf der,  
 He comyn ayon,  
 And alle he wern fayr and fat inow,  
 But markyd was ther non.

Be dere god, seyde gode [Robyn],  
 Hereof we xul have on.

20

[Robyn, &c.]

Robyn ' bent ' his joly bowe,  
 Therin he set a flo,  
 The fattest der of alle the herte  
 He clef ato.

[Robyn, &c.]

He haddé not the der islawe  
 Ne half cut of the hyde,  
 Ther cam a schrewde arwe out of the west, 30  
 That felde Robertés pryde.  
 Gandelyn lokyd hym est and west,  
 Be every syde.

[Robyn, &c.]

“ Hoo hat myn mayster slayin ?  
 Ho hat don this dede ?  
 Xal I never out of grene wode go  
 Ti[l] I se sydis blede.”

[Robyn, &c.]

Gandeleyn lokyd hym est and west, 40  
 And sowt under the sunne ;  
 He saw a lytil boy,  
 Heclepyn Wrennok of Doune.

[Robyn, &c.]

A good bowe in his hond,  
 A brod arwe therine,  
 And fowre and twenty goode arwys  
 Trusyd in a thrumme.

“ Be war the, war the, Gandeleyn,  
 Herof thu xalt ha' summe. 50

[Robyn, &c.]

“ Be war the, war the, Gandeleyn,  
 Hirof thu gyst plentè.”

Evere on for another, seyde Gandeleyn,  
 Mysaunter have he xal fle.

[Robyn, &c.]

Qworat xal our marke be?

Seyde Gandeleyn.

Everyche at otheris herte,

Seyde Wrennok ageyn.

60

[Robyn, &c.]

Ho xal yeve the ferste schote?

Seyde Gandeleyn.

And i xal yeve the on befor,

Seyde Wrennok ageyn.

[Robyn, &c.]

Wrennok schette a ful good schote,

And he schet not to hye,

Throw the sanchothis of his bryk,

It towchyd neyther thye.

70

[Robyn, &c.]

Now hast thu yovyn me on befor,

Al thus to Wrennok seyde he,

And, throw ' the ' myght of our lady,

A better i xal yeve the.

[Robyn, &c.]

Gandeleyn bent his goode bowe,

And set therin a flo,

He schet throw his grene certyl,

His herte he clef on too.

80

[Robyn, &c.]

Now xalt thu never yelp, Wrennok,  
At ale ne at wyn,  
That thu hast slawe goode Robyn,  
And his knave Gandeleyn.  
[Robyn, &c.]

Now xalt thu never yelp, Wrennok,  
At wyn, ne at ale,  
That thu hast slawe goode Robyn,  
And Gandeleyn his knave. 90  
Robyn Lyghth in grene wode bow[n]dyn.

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## II.

## THE TURNAMENT OF TOTTENHAM.

From a MS. in the Harleian library (No. 5396).

OF alle thes kene conquerours to carpe it wer kynde ;  
Of fele feghtyng folk ferly we fynde ;  
The Turnament of Totenham have we in mynde ;  
It wer harme sych hardynes wer holden byhynde.

In story as we rede  
Of Hawkyn, of Herry,  
Of Tomkyn, of Terry,  
Of them that were 'dughty'  
And stalworth in dede.

It befel in Totenham on a der day, 10  
Ther was mad a 'shurtyng' be the hy-way :

Theder com al the men of the contray,  
Of Hyssylton, of Hygate, and of Hakenay,

And all the swete swynke[rs].

Ther hopped Hawkyn,

Ther daunsed Dawkyn,

Ther trumped Tomkyn,

And all wer trewe drynkers.

Tyl the day was gon and evyn-song past,  
That thay schuld rekyn ther scot and ther contes cast:  
Perkyn, the potter, into the 'press' past,  
And sayd Rondol the refe, a doghter thou hast,

Tyb the dere :

Therfor wyt wold i,

Whych of alle thys bachelery

Wer best worthy

To wed hur to hys fere.

Upstyrt thos gadelyngys wyth ther long staves,  
And sayd, Rondol the refe, lo ! thys lad raves,  
Baldely amang us thy doghter he craves, 30  
And we er rycher men then he, and mor gode have

Of catell and corn ;

Then sayd Perkyn to Tybbe i have hyght

That i schul be alway redy in my ryght,

If that it schuld be thys day sevenyght,

Or ' elles ' yet to morn.

Then sayd Randolfe the refe, Ever be he waryed,  
That about this carpying lenger wold be ' taryed :

I wold not my doghter, that scho wer miscaryed,  
But at hur most worschyp i wold scho wer maryed : 40

Therfor a turnament schal begyn,  
Thys day sevenyght,  
Wyth a flayl for to fyght ;  
And [he] that is of most myght,  
Schalle brouke hur wyth wyne.

Whoso berys hym best in the turnament,  
Hym schalle be granted the gre be the comon assent,  
For to wyne my doghter wyth dughty[nesse] of dent,  
And Coppeld, my brode-henne, [that] was brouht out  
of Kent :

And my donnyd kowe : 50  
For no spens wyl i spare,  
For no catell wyl i care,  
He schal have my gray mare,  
And my spotty sowe.

Ther was many [a] bold lad ther bodyes to bede :  
Than thay toke thayr leve, and homward thay yede ;  
And alle the ' weke after ' thay graythed ther wede,  
Tyll it come to the day, that thay suld do ther dede.

They armed tham in mattes ;  
Thay set on ther nollys, 60  
For to kepe ther pollys,  
Gode blake bollys,  
For batryng of battes.

Thay sowed tham in schepeskynnes, for thay suld not  
brest :

Ilk-on toke a blak hat, insted of a crest :

A ' basket or a panyer before ' on ther brest,

And a flayle in ther hande ; for to fyght prest,

Furth gon thay fare :

Ther was kyd mekyl fors,

Who schuld best fend hys cors :

70

He that had no gode hors,

He gat hym a mare.

Sych another gadryng have i not sene oft,

When alle the gret company com rydand to the croft.

Tyb on a gray mare was set up on loft

On a sek ful of fedyr, for scho schuld syt soft,

And led ' till ' the ' gap.'

For cryeng of al the men

Forther wold not Tyb then,

Tyl scho had hur brode-hen

80

Set in hur lap.

A gay gyrdyl Tyb had on, borwed for the nonys,

And a garland on hur hed ful of rounde bonys,

And a broche on hur brest ful of ' sapphyre ' stonys,

Wyth the holy-rode tokenyng was wretyn for the  
nonys ;

' For no spendings thay had ' spared.

When joly Gyb saw hur there,

[ V. 66. Harow brod as a fanne above, *MS.*]

[ V. 77. And led hur to the cap, *MS.*]

[ V. 86. No catel was ther, *MS.*]

He gyrd so hys gray 'mare'  
 'That' sche lete a 'fowkin fare'  
 At the rereward.

90

I vow to god, quoth Herry, i schal not lefe 'behynde,'  
 May i mete wyth Bernard on Bayard the blynde,  
 Ich man kepe hym out of my wynde,  
 For whatsoever that he be, befor me i fynde,

I wot i schul hym greve.  
 Wele sayd, quoth Hawkyn,  
 And i avow, quoth Dawkyn,  
 May i mete wyth Tomkyn,  
 Hys flayle [i schal] hym reve.

I vow to god, quoth Hud, Tyb, son schal thou se, 100  
 Whych of alle thys bachelery grant[ed] is the gre:  
 I shal scomfet thaym alle, for the love of the;  
 In what place so i come thay schul have dout of me,  
 Myn armes ar so cler:

I bere a reddyl and a rake,  
 Poudred wyth a brennand drake,  
 And three cantell[es] of a cake  
 In ych a 'corner.'

I vow to god, quoth Hawkyn, yf 'i' have the gowt,  
 Al that i fynde in the 'felde thrustand' herabout, 110  
 Have i twyes or thryes redyn thurgh the route,  
 In ych a stede ther thay 'may se,' of me thay schal  
 have doute,

When i begyn to play.  
 I make avowe that i ne schalle,



But yf Tybbe wyl me calle,  
 Or i be thryes doun falle,  
 Ryght onys com away.

Then sayd Terry, and swor be hys crede ;  
 Saw thou never yong boy forther hys body bede,  
 For when thay fyght fastest and most ar in drede, 120  
 I schal take Tyb by the hand, and hur away lede :

I am armed at the full :  
 In myn armys i bere wele,  
 A dogh-trogh, and a pele,  
 A sadyll wythouten a panell,  
 With a fles of woll.

I vow to god, quoth Dudman, and swor be the stra,  
 Whyls me has left my mer, thou gets hur not swa ;  
 For scho ys wele schapen, and tyght as the ' rae,'  
 Ther ys no capul in thys myle before hur schal ga : 130

Sche wil ne noght begyle :  
 Sche wyl me ber, i dar wele say,  
 On a lang somerys day,  
 From Hyssylton to Hakenay,  
 Noght other half myle.

I vow to god, quoth Perkyn, thow speks of cold rost,  
 I schal wyrch wyselyer withouten any bost :  
 Five of the best capullys, that ar in thys ost,  
 I wot i schul thaym wynne, and bryng thaym to my-  
 cost,

And here i grant tham Tybbe : 140  
 Wele boyes her ys he,

That wyl fyght, and not fle,  
 For i am in my jolyte,  
 Wyth so forth, Gybbe.

When thay had ther vowes[made], furth[c]an they hyc,  
 Wyth flayles, and hornes, and trumpes mad of tre :  
 Ther wer alle the bachelerys of that contre,  
 They were dyght in aray, as thamselſe wold be :

Thayr baners wer ful bryght  
 Of an old ' roten' felle ; 150  
 The cheverone of a plow-mell ;  
 And the schadow of a bell,  
 Poudred wyth mone lyght.

I wot it ' was' no chylder game, whan thay togedyr met,  
 When ich a freke in the feld on hys ' fellow bet ',  
 And layd on styfly, for nothyng wold thay let,  
 And faght ferly fast, tylle ther horses swet,

And fewe wordys spoken ;  
 Ther were flayles al to-slatred,  
 Ther were scheldys al to-flatred, 160  
 Bollys and dysches al to-schatred,  
 And many hedys brokyn.

There was clynkyng of cart-sadellys and clatter yng of  
 cannes,

Of fele frekys in the feld brokyn wer ther fannes ;  
 Of sum wer the hedys brokyn, of sum the brayn-panes,  
 And yll war [thay] ' besene,' or thay went thens.

With swyppying of swepyllys,  
The boyes wer so wery for-fught,  
That thay myght not fyght mar oloft,  
But creped then about in the croft, 170  
As they wer croked crepyls.

Perkyn was so wery, that he began to 'loute':  
" Help, Hud! i am ded in thys ylk 'rowte':  
A hors for forty pens, a gode and a stoute!  
That i may lyghtly come of my noye out,  
For no cost wyl i spar."  
He styrt up as a snayle,  
And hent a capul be the tayle,  
And raght Dawkin hys flayle,  
And wan there a mar. 180

Perkyn wan five, and Hud wan twa:  
Glad and blythe thay war, that thay had don sa;  
Thay wold have tham to Tyb, and present hur with tha:  
The capulls were so wery, that thay myght not ga,  
But styl gon thay stond.  
Alas! quoth Hudde, my joye, i lese;  
Me had lever then a ston of chese,  
That der Tyb had al these,  
And wyst it wer my 'sond.'

Perkyn turnyd hym about in that ych thrange, 190  
Among thos wery boyes he wrest and he wrang;  
He threw tham down to the erth, and thrust tham amang;  
When he saw Tyrry away wyth Tyb fang,

And after hym ran ;  
 Off his horse he hym drogh,  
 And gaf hym of hys flayl inogh :  
 We te he ! quoth Tyb, and lugh,  
 Ye er a dughty man.

‘ Thus’ thay tugged and rugged, tyl yt was ner nyght :  
 All the wyves of Totenham come to se that syght 200  
 With wyspes and kexis, and ryschys ther lyght,  
 To fech hom ther husbandes, that wer tham trouth-  
 plyght,

And sum broght gret ‘ harows’  
 Ther husbandes for to hom fech,  
 Sum on dores, and sum on hech,  
 Sum on hyrdyllys, and som on crech,  
 And sum on whele-barows.

Thay gaderyd Perkyn about [on] everych syde,  
 And grant hym ther the [gre], the mor was hys pride :  
 Tyb and he, wyth gret merthe, homward con thay  
 ryde, 210

And wer al nyght to gedyr, tyl the morn tyde ;

And thay ‘ to church went’ :  
 So wele hys nedys he has sped,  
 That der Tyb he ‘ hath’ wed :  
 The prayse-folk, that hur led,  
 Wer of the torniment.

To that ylk fest com many for the nones ;  
 Some come hyphalt, and some trippand on the stonys ;

Sum a staf in hys hand, and sum two at onys;  
 Of sum wer the hedes broken, and [of] sum the schulder  
 bonys: 220

With sorow com thay thedyr.

Wo was Hawkyn, wo was Herry,

Wo was Tomkyn, wo was Terry,

And so was al the bachelary

When thay met togedyr.

At that fest thay wer servyd with a ryche aray,  
 Every fyve and fyve had a cokenay;  
 And so thay sat in jolyté al the lang day;  
 And, at the last, thay went to bed, with ful gret deray:  
 Mekyl myrth was them among; 230

In every corner of the hous

Was melody delycyous

For to her precious

Of syx menys sang.

### III.

#### THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN\*.

Yt fell abowght the Lamasse tyde,  
 Whan husbondes wyne ther haye,  
 The dowghtye Dowglasse bowynd him to ryde,  
 In Ynglond to take a praye.

\* Fought the 9th of August, 1388.

The yerlle of Fyffe, withouten stryffe,  
He bowyn him over Sulway :  
The grete wolde ever together ryde,  
That raysse they may rewe for aye.

Over ' Ottercap '-hyll they cam in,  
And so dowyn by Rodelyffe-crage, 10  
Upon Grene- ' Leyton ' they lyghted dowyn,  
' Styrande many a ' stage :

And boldely brente Northomberlond,  
And haryed many a towyn ;  
They dyd owr Ynglyssh men grete wrange,  
To battell that were not bowyn.

Than spake a berne upon the bent,  
Of comforte that was not colde,  
And sayd, We have Northomberlond,  
We have all welth in holde. 20

Now we have haryed all Bamborowe schyre,  
All the welth in the worlde have wee,  
I rede we ryde to Newe-castell,  
So styll and stalwurthlye.

Upon the morowe, when it was day,  
The standerdes schone fulle bryght ;  
To the Newe-castell they toke the waye,  
And thether they cam fulle ryght.

Sir Herry Perssy laye at the New-castell,  
I tell yow withowtten drede ; 30

He had byn a march-man all hys dayes,  
And kept Barwyke upon Twede.

To the Newe-castell when they cam,  
The Scottes they cryde on hyght,  
Sir Hary Perssy, and thow byste within,  
Com to the fylde and fyght :

For we have brente Northomberlonde,  
Thy erytage good and ryght ;  
And syne my logeyng I have take,  
With my brande dubbyd many a knyght. 40

Sir Harry Perssy cam to the walles,  
The Skottyssh oste for to se ;  
And sayd, And thou hast brent Northomberlond,  
Full sore it rewyth me.

Yf thou hast haryed all Bamborowe schyre,  
Thow hast done me grete envye ;  
For the trespasse thow hast me done,  
The tone of us schall dye.

Where schall I byde the, sayd the Dowglas,  
Or where wylte thow com to me ? 50  
“ Atte Otterborne in the hygh-way,  
Ther mast thow well logeed be.

“ The roo full rekeless ther sche runnes,  
To make the game and gle :  
The fawken and the fesaunt both,  
Among the holtes on hye.”

Ther mast thou have welth at wyll,  
Well looged ther mast be,  
Yt schall not be long or I com the tyll,  
Sayd syr Harry Perssye.

60

Ther schal I byde the, sayd the Dowglas,  
By the fayth of my bodye.  
Thether schall I com, sayd syr Harry Perssy ;  
My trowth I plyght to the.

A pype of wyne he gave them over the walles,  
Forsoth, as I yow saye :  
Ther he mayd the Dowglasse drynke,  
And all hys ost that daye.

The Dowglas turnyd hym homewarde agayne,  
Forsoth withowghten naye,  
He took his logeynge at Oterborne,  
Upon a wedynsday :

70

And ther he pyght his standerd dowyn,  
Hys gettingyng more and lesse ;  
And syne he warned his men to goo  
To chose ther geldynges gresse.

A Skottysshe knyght hoved upon the bent,  
A wache, I dare well saye :  
So was he ware on the noble Perssy,  
In the dawning of the daye.

80

He prycked to his pavyleon dore,  
As fast as he might ronne,



Awaken, Dowglas ! cryed the knyght,  
For hys love that syttes in trone.

Awaken, Dowglas ! cryed the knyght,  
For thow maste waken wyth wynne ;  
Yender have I spyed the prowde Perssy,  
And seven standardes wyth hym.

Nay, by my trowth, the Dowglas sayed,  
It ys but a fayned taylle :  
He durst not loke on my brede banner,  
For all Ynglonde so haylle.

90

Was I not yesterdaye at the Newe-castell,  
That stondes so fayre on Tyne ?  
For all the men the Perssy had,  
He cowde not garre me ones to dyne.

He stepped owt at his pavelyon dore,  
To loke and it were lesse :

“ Araye yow, lordynges, one and all,  
For here bygynnes no peysse.

100

The yerle of Mentaye, thow art my eme,  
The fowarde I gyve to the :  
The yerlle of Huntlay, cawte and kene,  
He schall ‘ wyth the be.’

The lord of Bowghan, in armure bryght,  
On the other hand he schall be :  
Lorde Johnstone and lorde Maxwell,  
They to schall be with me.

Swynton fayre, fylde upon your pryde,  
 To batell make you bowen : 110  
 Syr Davy Skotte, syr Water Stewarde,  
 Syr Jhon of Agurstone."

The Perssy came byfore hys oste,  
 Whych was ever a gentyll knyght,  
 Upon the Dowglas lowde can he crye,  
 I wyll holde that I have hyght :

For thow haste brente Northomberlonde,  
 And done me grete envye ;  
 For thys trespasse thow hast me done,  
 The tone of us schall dye. 120

The Dowglas answerde hym agayne,  
 With grete wurdes upon hye,  
 And sayd, I have twenty agaynst ' thy ' one,  
 Byholde and thow maste see.

With that the Perssye was grevyd sore,  
 Forsoth, as I yow saye :  
 He lyghted dowyn upon hys foote,  
 And schoote his horsse clene away.

Every man sawe that he dyd soo,  
 That rall was ever in rowght, 130  
 Every man schoote hys horsse hym froo,  
 And lyght him rowynde abowght.

Thus syr Hary Perssye toke the fylde,  
 Forsoth, as I yowe saye :

Jesu Cryste in heven on hyght  
Dyd helpe hym well that daye.

But nyne thowzand, ther was no moo ;  
The cronykle wyll not layne :  
Forty [thowsande] Skottes and fowre  
That day fowght them agayne. 140

But when the batell byganne to joyne,  
In haste ther cam a knyght,  
The letters fayr furth hath he tayne,  
And thus he sayd full ryght :

My lorde, your father he gretes you well,  
With many a noble knyght ;  
He desyres yow to byde  
That he may see thys fyght.

The baron of Grastoke ys com out of the west,  
Wyth hym a noble companye ; 150  
All they loge at your fathers thys nyght,  
And the battel fayne wolde they see.

For Jesus love, sayd syr Harye Perssy,  
That dyed for yow and me,  
Wende to my lorde my father agayne,  
And saye thow sawe me not with yee.

My trowth ys plyght to yonne Skottysch knyght,  
It nedes me not to layne,  
That I schulde byde hym upon thys bent,  
And I have hys trowth agayne : 160

And if that I wynde off thys growende,  
Forsoth onfowghten awaye,  
He wolde me call but a kowarde knyght  
In hys londe another daye.

Yet had I lever to be rynde and rente,  
By Mary, that mykell maye,  
Then ever my manhood schulde be reprovyd  
Wyth a Skotte another day.

Wherefore, schote, archars, for my sake,  
And let scharpe arowes flee: 170  
Mynstrells, playe up for your waryson,  
And well quyt it schall be.

Every man thynke on hys trewe love,  
And marke hym to the trenite:  
For to god I make myne avowe  
This day wyll I not fle.

The blodye harte in the Dowglas armes,  
Hys standerde stode on hye;  
That every man myght full well knowe,  
Bysyde stode stanes thre. 180

The whyte lyon on the Ynglyssh perte,  
Forsoth, as I yow sayne,  
The lucettes and the 'cressawntes' both;  
The Skottes fowght them agayne.

Upon sent Andrewe lowde can they crye,  
And thrysse they schowte on ayght,

And syne marked them one our Ynglysshe men,  
As I have tolde yow ryght.

Sent George the bryght, owr ladyes knyght,  
To name they were full fayne ; 190  
Owr Ynglyssh men they cryde on hyght,  
And thrysse ' they ' schowtte agayne.

Wyth that scharpe arowes bygan to flee,  
I tell yow in sertaine ;  
Men of armes byganne to joyne ;  
Many a dowghty man was ther slayne.

The Perssy and the Dowglas mette,  
That ather of other was fayne ;  
They ' swapped ' together whyll that ' they ' swette,  
With swordes of fine collayne ; 200

Tyll the bloode from ther bassonettes ranne,  
As the roke doth in the rayne.  
Yelde the to me, sayd the Dowglas,  
Or elles thow schalt be slayne :

For I see, by thy bryght bassonet,  
Thow arte sum man of myght ;  
And so I do, by thy burnysshed brande,  
Thow art an yerle or elles a knyght.

By my good faythe, sayd the noble Perssy,  
Now haste thou rede full ryght, 210  
Yet wyll I never yelde me to the,  
Whyll I may stonde and fyght.

They swappd together, whyll that they swette,  
With swordes scharpe and long ;  
Ych on other so faste ' they ' beette,  
Tyll ther helmes cam in peyses dowyn.

The Perssy was a man of strenght,  
I tell yow in thys stounde,  
He smote the Dowglas at the swordes length,  
That he felle to the growynde. 220

The sworde was scharpe and sore can byte,  
I telle yow in sertayne ;  
To the harte he cowde him smyte,  
Thus was the Dowglas slayne.

The stonderdes stode styll on ' ilke ' a syde,  
With many a grevous grone ;  
Ther ' they ' fowght the day, and all the nyght,  
And many a dowghty man was slayne.

Ther was no freke that ther wolde flye,  
But styffely in stowre can stond, 230  
Ych one hewyng on other whyll they myght drye,  
Wyth many a bayllefull bronde.

Ther was slayne upon the Skottes syde,  
Forsoth and sertenly,  
Syr James a Dowglas ther was slayne,  
That daye that he cowde dye.

The yerlle of Mentaye he was slayne,  
Gryssely groned upon the growynd ;

Syr Davy Skotte, syr Water Stewarde,  
Syr ' John ' of Agurstonne. 240

Syr Charles Morrey, in that place,  
That never a fote wold flee ;  
Sir Hugh Maxwell, a lorde he was,  
With the Dowglas dyd he dye.

Ther was slayne upon the Skottes syde,  
Forsoth, as I yow saye,  
Of fowre and forty thowsande Skottes,  
Went but eyghtene awaye.

Ther was slayne upon the Ynglisshe syde,  
Forsoth and sertenlye, 250  
A gentyll knyght, sir John ' Fitzhewe,'  
Yt was the more pety.

Syr James Harebotell ther was slayne  
For hym ther hartes were sore,  
The gentyll ' Lovell ' ther was slayne,  
That the Perssys standerd bore.

Ther was slayne upon the Ynglyssh perte,  
Forsoth, as I yow saye ;  
Of nyne thowsand Ynglyssh-men,  
Fyve hondert cam awaye. 260

The other were slayne in the fylde,  
Cryste kepe ther sowlles from wo,  
Seyng ther was so fewe fryndes  
Agaynst so many a foo.

Then on the morne they mayde them beerys

Of byrch and haysell graye ;

Many a wydowe with wepyng teyres

Ther makes they fette awaye.

Thys fraye bygan at Otterborne,

Bytwene the nyghte and the day ;

270

Ther the Dowglas lost hys lyffe,

And the Perssy was lede awaye.

Then was ther a Scottyss prisoner tayne,

Syr Hewe Montgomery was hys name,

Forsoth as I yow saye,

He borrowed the Perssy home agayne.

Now let us all for the Perssy praye

To Jesu most of myght,

To bryng hys sowlle to the blysse of heven,

For he was a gentyll knyght.

#### IV.

#### THE HONTYNG OF THE CHEVIAT.

THE Persé owt off Northombarlande,

And a vowe to god mayd he,

That he wold hunte in the mountayns

Of Chyviat within dayes thre ;

In the magger of doughté Dogles,

And all that ever with him be.

The fattiste hartes in all Cheviat

He sayd he wold kyll and cary them away.



Be my feth, sayd the dougheti Doglas agayn,  
I wyll let that hontyng yf that I may. 10

Then the Persé owt of Banborowe cam,  
With him a myghtee meany ;  
With fifteen hondrith ' archeres ' bold,  
The wear chosen owt of shyars thre.

This begane on a monday at morn,  
In Cheviat the hillys so he ;  
The chyld may rue that ys unborn,  
It was the mor pittè.

The dryvers thorowe the woodes went  
For to reas the dear ; 20  
Bomen byckarte uppone the bent  
With ther browd aras cleare.

Then the wyld thorowe the woodes went ;  
On every syde shear ;  
Grea hondes thorowe the grevis glent,  
For to kyll thear dear.

The begane in Chyviat the hyls ' abone,'  
Yerly on a monnyn-day,  
Be that it drewe to the oware of none  
A hondrith fat hartes ded ther lay. 30

The blewe a mort uppone the bent,  
The semblyd on sydis shear ;  
To the quyrry then the Persé went,  
To se the bryttlynge off the deare.

He sayd, It was the Duglas promys  
This day to met me hear ;

But I wyste he wold faylle verament :

A great oth the Persé swear.

At the laste, a squyar of Northomberlonde

Lokyde at his hand full ny, 40

He was war athe doughetie Doglas commynge,

With him a myghtté meany,

Both with spear, ' byll ' and brande :

Yt was a myghti fight to se,

Hardyar men both off hart nar hande

Wear not in Christiantè.

The wear twenty-hondrith spear-men good,

Withowte any feale ;

The wear borne along be the watter a Twyde,

Yth bowndes of Tividale. 50

Leave off the brytlying of the dear, he sayde,

And to your ' bowys ' lock ye tayk good heed ;

For never sithe ye wear on your methars borne

Had ye never so mickle ned.

The 'dougheti Dogglas on a stede,

He rode ' all ' his men before ;

His armor glytteryde as dyd a glede ;

A bolder barne was never born.

Tell me ' what ' men ye ar, he says,

Or whos men that ye be : 60

Who gave youe leave to hunte in this

Chyviat-chays in the spyt of me ?

The first 'man' that ever him an answeare mayd,  
It was the good lord Persé:  
We wyll not tell the 'what' men we ar, he says,  
Nor whos men that we be;  
But we will hount here in this chays  
In the spyt of thyne and of the.

The fattiste hartes in all Chyviat  
We have kyld and cast to carry them away. 70  
By my troth, sayd the doughté Dogglas agayn,  
Therfor the ton of us shall de this day.

Then sayd the doughté Doglas  
Unto the lord Persé:  
To kyll all these giltles men,  
Alas! it wear great pittè.

But, Persé, thowe art a lord of lande,  
I am a yerle callyd within my contrè;  
Let all our men uppone a parti stande,  
And do the battell off the and of me. 80

Now Cristes cors on his crowne, sayd the lord Persè,  
Whosoever therto says nay.  
Be my troth, doughté Doglas, he says,  
Thow shalt never se that day;

Nethar in Ynglonde, Skottlonde, nar France,  
Nor for no man of a woman born,  
But and fortune be my chance,  
I dar met him on man for on.

Then bespayke a squyar of Northombarlonde,  
Ric[ard] Wytharyngton was his nam : 90  
It shall never be tolde in Sothe-Ynglonde, he says,  
To kyng Herry the fourth for sham.

I wat youe byn great lordes twaw,  
I am a poor squyar of lande ;  
I wyll never se my captayne fyght on a fylde,  
And stande myselffe and loocke on ;  
But whyll I may my weppone welde,  
I wyll not [fayl] both harte and hande.

That day, that day, that dredfull day,—  
The first fit here I fynde : 100  
And youe wyll here any mor athe hountyng athe  
Chyviat,  
Yet ys ther mor behynd.

The Yngglyshe-men hade ther bowys yebent,  
Ther hartes were good yenoughe ;  
The first off arros that the shote off,  
Seven skore spear-men the sloughe.

Yet byddys the yerle Doglas uppon the bent,  
A captayne good yenoughe;  
And that was sene, verament,  
For he wrought hom both woo and wouche. 110

The Dogglas pertyd his ost in thre,  
Lyk a cheffe ' cheften ' off pryde,  
With suar speares off myghtté tre,  
The cum in on every syde.

Thrughe our Yngglishe archery  
Gave many a wounde full wyde ;  
Many a doughete the garde to dy,  
Which ganyde them no pryde.

The Ynglyshe-men let thear ' bowys ' be,  
And pulde owt brandes that wer ' bright ;' 120  
It was a hevy syght to se  
Bryght swordes on basnites lyght.

Thorowe ryche male and myne-ye-ple,  
Many sterne the stroke done streght :  
Many a freyke, that was full fre,  
Ther undar-foot dyd lyght.

At last the Duglas and the Persé met,  
Lyk to captayns of myght and of mayne ;  
The swapte togethar tyll the both swat  
With swordes that wear of fyn myllàn. 130

Thes worthé freckys for to fyght  
Therto the wear full fayne,  
Tyll the bloode owte off thear basnetes sprete,  
As ever dyd heal or ran.

' Holde ' the, Persé, sayd the Doglas,  
And ifeth I shall the brynge  
Whar thowe shalte have a yeris wagis  
Of Jamy our Scottish kynge.

Thou shalte have thy ransom fre,  
I hight the hear this thinge, 140

For the manfullyste man yet art thowe,  
That ever I conqueryd in filde fightyng.

Nay, sayd the lord Persé,  
I tolde it the beforne,  
That I wolde never yeldyde be  
To no man of woman born.

With that ther cam an arrowe, hastily,  
Forthe off a myghtté wane,  
Hit hathe strekene the yerle Duglàs  
In at the brest-bane. 150

‘Thoroue’ lyvar and longs bathe  
The sharpe arrowe ys gane,  
That never after, in all his lyffe-days,  
He spayke mo wordes but ane,  
That was, Fyghte ye, my myrry men, whyllys ye may,  
For my lyff-days ben gan.

The Persé leanyde on his brande,  
And sawe the Duglas de ;  
He tooke the dede mane be the hande,  
And sayd, Wo ys me for the ! 160

To have savyde thy lyffe I wold have pertyde with  
My landes for years thre ;  
For a better man of hart, nare of hande,  
Was not in all the north contrè.

Off all that se a Skottishe knyght,  
Was callyd sir Hewe the Monggonbyrry,

He sawe the Duglas to the deth was dyght ;  
 He spendyd a spear, a trusti tre :

He rod uppon a corsiare  
 Throughe a hondrith archery ; 170  
 He never stynttyde, nar never blane,  
 Tyll he cam to the good lord Persé.

He set uppone the lorde Persé  
 A dynte that was full soare ;  
 With a suar spear of a myghtté tre  
 Clean thorow the body he the Persé ' bore,'

Athe tother syde, that a man myght se,  
 A large cloth-yard and mare ;  
 Towe bettar captayns wear nat in Cristianté,  
 Then that day slain wear ther. 180

An archar off Northomberlonde  
 Say slean was lord Persé,  
 He bar a bende bowe in his hand,  
 Was made off trusti tre :

An arow, that a cloth-yarde was lang,  
 Toth harde stele hayld he ;  
 A dynt that was both sad and soar,  
 He sat on sir Hewe the Monggonbyrry.

The dynt yt was both sad and sar,  
 That he of Monggonberry sete, 190  
 The swan-fethars, that his arrowe bar,  
 With his hart-blood the wear wete.

Ther was never a freake wone foot wolde fle,  
 But still in stour dyd stand,  
 Heawyng on yche othar, whyll the myght dre,  
 With many a balfull brande.

This battell begane in Chyviat,  
 An owar before the none,  
 And, when even-song-bell was rang,  
 The battell was nat half done.

200

The tooke [on] on ether hand,  
 Be the lyght off the mone;  
 Many had no strenght for to stande,  
 In Chyviat the hillys 'abone.'

Of fyfteen-hondrith archars of Ynglonde  
 Went away but fifti and thre;  
 Of twenty-hondrith spear-men of Skotlonde,  
 But even five and fifti:

But all wear slayne Cheviat within:  
 The had no 'strenght' to stand on hy:  
 The chylde may rue that ys unborne,  
 It was the mor pittè.

210

Thear was slayne with the lord Persé,  
 Sir John of Agerstone,  
 Sir Roger the hinde Hartly,  
 Sir Wyllyam the bolde Hearone.

Sir Jorg the worthé Lovelè,  
 A knyght of great renowen,



Sir Raff the ryche Rugbè,  
With dyntes wear beaten dowene. 220

For Wetharryngton my harte was wo,  
That ever he slayne shulde be ;  
For when both his leggis wear hewyne into,  
Yet he knyled and fought on hys kny.

Ther was slayne with the dougheti Douglas  
Sir Hewe the Monggonbyrry,  
Sir Davy Lwdale that worthé was,  
His sistars son was he.

Sir Charls a Murré, in that place,  
That never a foot wolde fle ; 230  
Sir Hewe Maxwell, a lorde he was,  
With the Doglas dyd he dey.

So on the morrowe the mayde them byears  
Off birch and hasel so ' gray '  
Many wedous, with wepyng tears,  
Cam to fach ther makys away.

Tivydale may carpe off care,  
Northombarlond may mayke ' great ' mon,  
For towe such captayns as slayne wear thear  
On the march-perti shall never be non. 240

Word ys commen to Eddenburrowe,  
To Jamy the Skottishe kyng,  
That dougheti Douglas, lyfftenant of the merches,  
He lay slean Chyviot within.

His handdes dyd he weal and wryng,  
He sayd, Alas ! and woe ys me !  
Such anothar captayn Skotland within,  
He sayd, yefeth shuld never be.

Worde is commyn to lovly Londone,  
Till the fourth Harry our kyng, 250  
That lord Persé leyff-tenante of the merchis,  
He lay slayne Chyviat within.

God have merci on his soll ! sayd kyng Harry,  
Good Lord, yf thy will it be !  
I have a hondrith captayns in Ynglonde, he sayd,  
As good as ever was he :  
But, Persé, and I brook my lyffe,  
Thy deth well quyte shall be.

As our noble kyng mayde his avowè,  
Lyke a noble prince of renowen, 260  
For the deth of the lord Persè,  
He dyde the battell of Hombyll-down :

Wher syx and thritté Skottish knyghtes  
On a day wear beaten down :  
Glendale glytteryde on ther armor bryght,  
Over castill, towar, and town.

This was the hontynge off the Cheviat,  
That tear begane this spurn :  
Old men, that knowen the grownde well yenoughe,  
Call it the battell of Otterburn. 270

At Otterburn began this spurne  
    Uppon a monnyn-day :  
Ther was the dougghté Doglas slean,  
    The Persé never went away.

Ther was never a tym on the march-partes,  
    Sen the Doglas and the Persé met,  
But yt was mervele and the rede blude ronñe not  
    As the reane doys in the stret.

Jhessue Crist our 'balys' bete  
    And to the blys us brynge ! 280  
Thus was the hountynge of the 'Chyviat :'  
    God send us all good endyng !

## V.

## REQUIEM TO THE FAVOURITES OF HENRY VI.

The subject of this ballad is the death of William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, who being exiled for five years, was taken at sea by a ship of war called the *Nicholas of the Tower*, belonging to the duke of Exeter, and on the 2d day of May, 1450, beheaded on the coast of Dover. (See Caxtons, Stowes, and other chronicles\*.) It appears to have been written immediately after that event, and before the Kentish insurrection which began in the latter part of the same month.

From a MS. in the Cotton Library, Vespasian B. xvi.

IN the moneth of May, when grasse groweth grene,  
 Flagrant in her floures, with swete savour,  
 Jac Napes wold over the see, a mariner to ben  
 With his clogs and his cheyn, to seke more tresour ;  
 Suych a payn prikked hym, he asked a confessour :  
 Nicolas said, I am redi thi confessour to be.  
 He was holden so, that he ne passed that hour :  
 For Jac Napes soule *Placebo* and *Dirige* †.

[\* A particular account of this treacherous murder is contained in a letter dated the 5th of May, 1450, from William Lomner to "the ryght worchipfull John Paston at Norwich." *Fenns Original Letters*, i. 39. ED.]

† The *Placebo* and *Dirige* 'are' part of the mass or service for the dead in the Romish church, of which the author distributes the several parts among the characters he has introduced. See the *Officium Defunctorum* of the Roman Breviary. Skelton, in his "Boke of Philip Sparrow," makes a similar use of it.

Who shall execute his exequies, with a solempnité?  
 Bisshopes and lordes, as grete reson is, 10  
 Monkes, chanons, prestes, and other clergie,  
 Pray for this dukes soule, that it might come to blis;  
 And let never suychn another come after this.  
 His interfectours, blessed might thei be,  
 And graunte them for ther dede to regne with angelis,  
 And for Jac Nape soule *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

*Placebo* begynneth the bisshop of Herford;  
*Dilexi*, for myn avauncement, saith the bisshop of  
 Chestre;  
 Heir me, saith Salisbury, this gothe to ferre forthe; 20  
*Ad deum cum tribularer*, saith the abbot of Gloucestre;  
*Deus custodit*, saith the abbot of Rouchestre;  
*Levavi oculos*, saith frere Stanbury, *volavi*;  
*Si iniquitates*, saith the bisshop of Worce[s]tre;  
 For Jac Nape soule, *De profundis clamavi*.

*Opera manuum tuarum*, seith the cardynal wisely,  
 That brought forth *confitebor*, for all this Napes reson;  
*Audivi vocem*, songe allemighty god an hye,  
 And therefore syng we, *Magnificat anima mea do-*  
*minum*;

Lucie widow of Edmund earl of Kent (brother and successor to Thomas) bequeathed 1000 crowns to the priory of the Holy Trinity, in London, on condition that every convent in each of the houses named in her will, should once a month in their quire say "*Placebo* and *Dirige* by note, for the souls of them the said Edmund and Lucie by name," &c. *Dug. Baro. ii. 77.*

Unto this *Dirige* most we gon and come,  
 This pascall tyme, to say veryli, 30  
 Thre psalmes and thre lessons, that is all and some ;  
 For Jac Nape soule *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Executors of this office, *Dirige* for to synge,  
 Shall begyn the bisshop of Synt-Asse ;  
*Verba mea auribus*, saith [the] abbot of Redyng.  
 Alle your joye and hope is come to alassee ;  
*Comiterere domine*, yet graunte us grace,  
 Saith [the] abbot of Synt-Albans, ful sorily  
 The abbot of the Toure-hill, with his fat face,  
 Quaketh and tremuleth, for *Domine ne in furore*. 40

Maister 'Walter' Liard shal syng *Nequando* ;  
 The abbot of Westmynstre, *Domine deus meus in te*  
*speravi* ;  
*Requiem eternam* graunte them all to come to,  
 Therto a *Pater noster*, saith the bisshop of Synt-  
 Davy :  
 For thes soules that wise were and mightty,  
 Suffolk, Moleyns, and Roos, thes thre  
 And in especial for Jac Napes, that ever was wyly ;  
 For his soule *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Rise up, Say, rede *Parce me domine*,  
*Nichil enim sunt dies mei*, thou shalt synge ; 50  
 The bisshop of Carlyle, syng *Credo* ful sore :  
 To suychn fals traitours come foule endyng.

The baron of Dudley, with grete mornyng,  
Redeth, *Tedet animam meam vite mee* :

Who but Danyel, *Qui lasarum*, shal syng?  
For Jac Nape soule, *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

John Say redeth, *Manus tue fecerunt me* ;

*Libera me*, syngeth Trevilian, warre the rere,  
That thei do no more so, *Requiescant in pace* :

Thus prayes all Englund ferre and nerre, 60

Where is Somerset? whi aperes he not here?

To synge *Dies ire et miserie* ?

God graunte Englund alle infere,

For thes traitours to syng *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Meny mo ther be behynde, the sothe for to telle,

That shal messes oppon thes do [ings] synge ;

I pray som man do ryng the belle,

That these forsaiden may come to the sacryng.

And that in brief tyme, without more tarieng,

That this messe may be ended in suyche degre ; 70

And that all Englund joyfull may synge,

The commendacion with *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

## VI.

## SATIRE AGAINST THE LOLLARDS,

— particularly leveled at sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham, the Coryphæus of the sect; who, having been condemned to the flames for his erroneous opinions, made his escape from the Tower before the day appointed for his execution. This happened in the year 1413, when the present ballad seems to have been written. Lord Cobham in his retreat, in order to effect a speedy and thorough reformation both in Church and State, formed a plan of seizing the king's person, and actually caused a large body of his enthusiastic adherents, to the number, as is said, of 20,000, all totally ignorant of his designs, but not the less ready to execute his orders, to assemble in St. Giles's fields, where many of them were seized, and the rest dispersed by the civil power. And their chieftain himself, being taken a few years after, was hanged as a traitor, and burnt on the gibbet as a heretic, pursuant to his sentence. (*Vide Rot. Parl.* IV. 107, &c.)

Lollardy, a word of uncertain derivation, is well known to mean with us the doctrines propagated by John Wickliffe and his followers, which had in the beginning of this reign gained a considerable footing. To check the further progress of this popular-heresy, and maintain the cause of "the great goddess Diana," which appears to have been in no small danger, the reigning clergy had recourse to two methods; of which Ridicule or Satire was the more innocent, but Hanging and Burning the more efficacious\*.

The following ballad is contained in the same MS. with the preceding.

\* The latter argument is irrefragable, and indeed the only mode of conviction upon which the Orthodox Clergy of all ages and countries have, as the *dernier resort*, chosen to rely. It was used at the Reformation with great success, particularly by that pious prince and subtle theologist Henry VIII., whose *ultima ratio* it was in all his public disputations, where, as is well known, he never failed to silence his opponent. Unfortunately, some of the most dexterous polemics of that period were afterwards confuted upon their own principle. (*Vide Fox's Martyrs, Lives of Cranmer, Ridley, &c.*)



Lo he that can be Cristes clerc,  
 And knowe the knottes of his crede,  
 Now may se a wonder werke,  
 Of harde happes to take goud heede,  
 The dome of deth is hevy drede,  
 For hym that wol not mercy crie,  
 Than is my rede, for mucke ne mede,  
 That no man melle of 'lollardye.'

I sey for meself, yut wist I never,  
 But now late what hit shuld be, 10  
 And by my trouth I have wel lever,  
 No more kyn than my a. b. c.  
 To lolle so hie in suyche degre,  
 Hit is no perfit 'polecie,'\*  
 Sauf seker sample to the and me,  
 To bewar of lollardie.

The game is noght to lolle so hie,  
 That fete failen fondement,  
 And yut is a moche folie,  
 For fals beleve to ben brent; 20  
 That the bibell is al mys went,  
 To jangle of Job or Jeremye,  
 That construen hit after her entent,  
 For lewde lust of lollardie.

Hit is unkyndly for a knight,  
 That shuld a kynges castel kepe,

\* Profecie, *MS.*

To bable the bibel day and night,  
In restyng tyme when he shuld slepe,  
And carefoly away to crepe,  
For alle the chief of chivalrie, 30  
Wel aught hym to waile and wepe,  
That suyche lust hath in lollardie.

An old castel and not repaired,  
With wast walles and woves wide,  
The wages ben ful yvel wared,  
With suiche a capitayn to abide,  
That rereth riot for to ride  
Agayns the kyng and his clergie,  
With prive peyne and pore pride,  
Ther is a poynt of lollardie. 40

For many a man withyn a while  
Shal aby his gult ful sore,  
So fele gostes to begile,  
Hym aught to rue evermore ;  
For his sorowe shal he never restore,  
That he venemed with envye,  
But ban the burthe that he was of bore,  
Or ever had lust in lollardie.

Every shepe that shuld be fed in felde,  
And kepte fro wolfes in her folde, 50  
Hem nedeth nether spere ne shulde,  
Ne in no castel to be withholde.  
For that the pasture is ful colde,  
In somer seson when hit is drie,

And namly when the soyle is solde,  
For lewde lust of lollardie.

An old castel draw al down,  
Hit is ful hard to rere it newe,  
With suych a congregacion,  
That cast hem to be untrewē: 60  
When beggers mow nether bake ne brewe,  
Ne have wherwith to borow ne bie,  
Than mot [they] not robbe or reve,  
Unde[r] the colour of lollardie.

That castel is not for a kyng,  
That the walles ben overthrowe,  
And yut wel wors abidyng,  
When the captayn away is flowe;  
And forsake spere and bowe,  
To crepe fro knighthode into clergie, 70  
That is a bitter blast yblowe,  
To be bawde of lollardie.

I trowe ther be no knight alyve  
That wold have don so open a shame,  
For that crafte to studi or strive  
Hit is no gentel mannes game  
But if hym lust to have a name  
Of peloer under ipocrasie,  
And that were a foule defame  
To have suych lose of lollardie. 80

And perde lolle thei never so long,  
Yut wol lawe make hem lowte,

God wol not suffre hem be so strong  
To bryng her perpos so abowte ;  
With saunz faile and saunz doute,  
To rere riot and robberie,  
By reson thei shul not long route,  
While the taile is docked of lollardie.

Of the hede hit is las charge  
When grace wol not be his gide, 90  
Ne suffre hym for to lepe at large,  
But hevely his hede to hide,  
Where shuld he other route or ride  
Agayns the chief of chivalrie,  
Not hardi in no place to abide,  
For alle the sekte of lollardie.

A god, what unkyndly gost  
Shuld greve that god gruced nought !  
Thes lollardes that lothen ymages most,  
With mannes handes made and wrought, 100  
And pilgrimages to be sought,  
Thei seien hit is but mawmentrie ;  
He that this lose first up brought  
Had gret lust in lollardie.

He wer ful lewde that wold byleve  
In figure made of stok or ston,  
Yut for me shuld we none reprove  
Nether of Marie ne of Jon,

Petre, Poule, ne other none  
Canonised by clergie,  
Than the seyntes everychone 110  
Be litel holde to lollardie.

And namly James among hem alle  
For he twyves had ternement,  
Moch mischaunse mot him befall  
That last beheded hym in Kent ;  
And alle that were of that assent  
To Crist of heven I clepe and crie  
Sende hem the same jugement,  
And alle the sekte of lollardie. 120

For that vengans agayns kynde  
Was a poynt of cowardyse,  
And namly suyche on to bete or bynde  
That might not stand set ne rise ;  
What dome wold ye hym devyse  
By lawe of armes or gentrie,  
But serve hym in the same wise  
And alle the sekte of lollardie ?

When falsnes failleth frele folie,  
Pride wol perseyne sone among, 130  
Than willerdome with old envy  
Can none other way but wrong.  
For synne and shame with sorowe strong,  
So overset with avutrie,

That fals-beleve is fayn to fong  
The lewde lust of lollardie.

And under colour of suiche lollyng,  
To shape sodeyn surreccion  
Agaynst oure liege lord [the] kyng,  
With fals ymaginacion. 140  
And for that corsed conclusion,  
By dome of knighthod and clergie,  
Now turneth to confusion  
The sory sekte of lollardie.

For holy writ berith witnes  
He that fals is to his kyng  
That shamful deth and hard distres  
Shal be his dome at his endyng ;  
Than double deth for suyche lollyng  
Is hevy when we shul hennes hye, 150  
Now lord that madest of nought alle thing  
Defende us alle fro lollardie.

## VII.

A ROUNDELL OF 'KING HENRY THE SIXTH' AYENS  
HIS CORONACION,

MADE BY LYDEGATE DAUN JOHN.

From the Harleian MSS. No. 7333. Dan John Lydgate, monk of Bury, who, if we regard the bulk and number of his writings, was certainly the greatest poet we ever had, dyed very old, 'about the middle of the fifteenth century\*.' Hen. VI. was crowned in 1422.

REJOICE ye reames of Englonde and of ffraunce,  
A braunche that sprang oute of the floure de lys,  
Blode of seint Edward and seint Lowys,  
God hath this day sent in governaunce.

God of nature hath yoven him suffisaunce  
Likly to atteyne to grete honure and pris.

O hevenly blossome, o budde of all plesaunce,  
God graunt the grace for to ben als wise  
As was thi fader by circumspect advise,  
Stable in vertue withoute variaunce.

\* "The completest list of [the works of] this voluminous prosaick and driveling monk," amounting to 251, and of which the trifle here inserted is rather a favourable specimen, may be seen in Mr. Ritsons *Bibliographia Poetica*. (8vo. 1802, p. 66.) Ed.

## VIII.

## A ROUNDEL ON FORTUNE.

From MSS. More. F f. 1. 6.

WHEN Fortune list yewe here assent,  
 What is too deme that may be doo,  
 There schapeth nought from her entent,  
 For as sche will it goth ther to.

All passeth by her jugement,  
 The hy astate the pore allsoo,

When Fortune [&c.]

Too lyve in joy out of turment,  
 Seyng the worlde goth too and fro,  
 Thus is my schort aviseament,  
 As hyt comyth so lete it go.

When Fortune [&c.]

## IX.

## A SONG ON AN INCONSTANT MISTRESS.

From the same MS.

WHO so lyst to love god send hym right good spede.

Some tyme y loved, as ye may see,

A goodlyer ther myght none be,



Here womanhode in all degree,  
Full well she quytt my mede.

[Who so lyst &c.]

Unto the tyme, upon a day,  
To sone ther fill a gret affray,  
She badde me walke forth on my way,  
On me she gatt none hede. 10

Woso lyst &c.

I askid the cause why and wherfor,  
She displeside was with me so sore ;  
She wold nat tell, but kept in store,  
Perdy it was no nede.

Woso lyst &c.

For if y hadde hur displeased  
In worde or dede, or hir greved,  
Than if she hadde before meved,  
She hadde cause in dede. 20

Woso list &c.

But well y wote y hadde nat done,  
Hur to displese, but in grete mone  
She hath me left and ys agone,  
For sorwe my hert doth blede.

Wo so lyst &c.

Some tyme she wold to me complayne,  
Yff she had felt dysease or payne,  
Now fele y nought but grete disdayne,  
Allas, what is your rede? 30

Wo so list &c.

Shall y leve of, and let hur go?  
 Nay ner the rather will y do so,  
 Yet though unkyndnesse do me wo,  
 Hur will y love and drede.

Wo so list &c.

Some hope that whan she knowith the case,  
 Y truste to god that withyne short spase  
 She will me take agayne to grace,  
 Than have y well abydde.

40

Wo so list &c.

And for trew lovers shall y pray,  
 That ther ladyes fro day to day,  
 May ' them ' rewarde so that they may  
 With joy ther lyves lede.

Wo so list &c.

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## X.

### THE CONTEST OF THE IVY AND THE HOLLY.

From a MS. of Henry the 6ths time. (Bibl. Harl. No. 5396.) Stow, in his "Survey of London," 1598, p. 284, speaking of a long pole preserved in Gisors or Gerards Hall in the city, says it "might be used of olde time (as then the custome was in every parish) to be set up in the streete, in the summer, as a Maypole, . . . and to stand in the Hall before the scrine, decked with HOLME and IVIE, all the feast of Christmas;" and adds, in the margin, by way of gloss, that "Every mans house of olde time was decked with HOLLY and IVIE in the winter, especially at Christmas."

It appears from Ames and Herberts "*Typographical Antiquities*,"

[V. 44. then. MS.]

p. 359, that, in 1561, W. Copland paid 4d. for a licence, from the Stationers company, to print "A ballette entituled *holy and hyve*." In the above library (No. 2253) is "A poem upon the contention between the Summer and the Winter," which, if not the original of the following song, may serve to evince the popularity of the subject. It begins thus:

"Un graunt estrif oy lautrer \*  
Entre este e sire yver,  
Ly queux avereit la seignurie" &c.

NAY, Ivy, nay,  
Hyt shal not be, I wys;  
Let Holy hafe the maystry,  
As the maner ys.

Holy stond in the halle,  
Fayre to behold;  
Ivy stond wythout the dore,  
She ys ful sore a-cold.  
Nay, Ivy, [&c.]

Holy and hys mery men, 10  
They dawnsyn and they syng;  
Ivy and hur maydenys,  
They wepyn and they wryng.  
Nay, [&c.]

Ivy hath a kybe,  
She kaght yt wyth the colde,  
So mot they all haf ae,  
That wyth Ivy hold.  
Nay, Ivy, 'nay,' hyt [&c.]

\* Not *Vantrre* as in *Wan. Cat.*

Holy hat berys, 20

As rede as any rose,

The foster [and] the ' hunter '

Kepe hem fro the ' doos. '

Nay, Ivy, nay, hyt [&c.]

Ivy hath berys,

As blake as any slo;

Ther com the oule,

And ete hym as she goo.

Nay, Ivy, nay, hyt [&c.]

Holy hath byrdys, 30

A ful fayre flock,

The nyghtyngale, the poppynguy,

The gayntyl lavyrok.

Nay, [&c.]

Gode Ivy,

What byrdys ast thu?

Non but the howlat,

That kreye how, how!

Nay, Ivy, nay,

Hyt shal not [be, I wys, 40

Let Holy hafe the maystry,

As the maner ys.]

[V. 22. hunters. MS.]

[V. 23. doo. MS.]

## XI.

## A SONG IN PRAISE OF SIR PENNY.

The praises of this worthy knight have been a favourite topic both with the English and Scottish poets.—See “Ancient Scottish poems,” published by Lord Hailes, Edinburgh, 1770, p. 153; or “The Caledonian Muse,” Lond. 1785\*. There is an excellent poem on this subject in a MS. of the Cotton library, Galba E. ix.—This is from the Sloane MS. (No. 2593) above described. In a MS. of the 13th or 14th century, in the library of Berne, (Num. 354), is an ironical poem in praise of money, intitled, “*De dans Denier,*” of which the following is a specimen :

“Denier fait cortois de vilain  
 Denier fait de malade sain  
 Denier sorprenent le monde a plain  
 Tot est en son commandement.”

The origin of all these pieces is, possibly, to be referred to a very ancient French fabliau, intitled *De Dom Argent*, of which M. le Grand has given an extract in modern prose. (*Fabliaux ou Contes*, tom. iii. p. 243.)

Go bet, Peny, go bet [go],  
 For thu makyn bothe frynd and fo.

\* The work here quoted was then partly printed, but never published. Mr. Ritson subsequently increased the collection with the “Pystyl of swete Susane,” from the Vernon MS. and other poems, and added “Essays” and a “Glossary,” all now in the possession of the editor, who is preparing the work, in its improved state, for the press.

Peny is an hardy knyght,  
Peny is mekyl of myght,  
Peny of wrong, he makyt ryght,  
In every cuntré qwer he goo.  
[Go bet, &c.]

Thow I have a man islawe,  
And forfetyd the kyngés lawe,  
I xal fyndyn a man of lawe, 10  
Wyl takyn myn peny, and let me goo.  
[Go bet, &c.]

And if I have to don fer or ner,  
And Peny be myn massanger,  
Than am I nothing in dwer,  
My cause xal be wol doo.  
[Go bet, &c.]

And if I have pens bothe good and fyn,  
Men wyl byddyn me to the wyn,  
That I have xal be ther[in]: 20  
Sekyrly thei wil seyn so.  
[Go bet, &c.]

And quan I have non in myn purs,  
Peny bet, ne peny wers,  
Of me thei holdyn but lytil fors,  
He was a man, let hym goo.  
[Go bet, Peny, go bet, go,  
For thu makyn both frynd and fo.]

## XII.

## "LYTYLL THANKE."

From a MS. in the Cotton library (Titus A. xxvi.) of Henry the 6th's time. A few stanzas at the beginning are supposed to be lost: [some preceding leaves of the MS. appearing to have been cut out.]

Go ye beffore, be twayne and twayne,  
 Wysly that ye be not i-sayne  
 And 'I'll' go home and com agayne,  
 To witte what dothe owre syre,  
Gode gosyp.

For yyff hit happ he dyd me see,  
 A strype or to god myght send me,  
 Yytte sche that is aferre lette her flee,  
 For that is nowght be this fyre,  
Gode gosyp. 10

'Tho' everyche of hem browght ther dysche,  
 Sum browght fleshe and som browght fyshe;  
 Quod Margery meke thann with a wyise,  
 I wold that Frankelyne the harper were here,  
Gode gosip.

She hade notte so sone the word i-sayd,  
 But in come Frankelyn at a brayd,

God save youe, mastres, he sayde,  
 I come to make youe some chere,  
 Gode gosyp. 20

Anon he began to drawe owght his harpe,  
 Tho the gossyppes began to starte,  
 They callyd the tawyrner to ffyll the quarte,  
 And lette note for no coste,  
 Good gosyp.  
 Then seyde the gossyppes all infere,  
 Streke up, harper, and make gode chere,  
 And wher that I goo, fere or nere,  
 To owre hu[s]bondes make thou no *boste*,  
 God gossip. 30

Nay, mastres, as mote I thee,  
 Ye schall newyr be wrayed ffor me,  
 I had lever her dede to be  
 As hereof to be knowe,  
 Good gosyp.

They ffylled the pottes by and by,  
 They lett not for no coste trully,  
 The harpyr stroke up merrely,  
 That they myght onethe blowe,  
 Good gosyp. 40

They sette them downe, they myght no more,  
 Theyre legges they thought were passyng soore,

[V. 29. The word supplied in Italics has been torn off the MS.]



They prayd the harper kepe sum store,  
And lette us drynke a bowght,

Gode gosyp.

Heye the tavernere I praye the,  
Go fyll the potteys lyghtly,  
And latte us dry[n]ke by and by,  
And lette the cupe goo route,

Good gosyp. 50

This ys the thowght that gossypes take,  
Onys in the weke they wyll merey make,  
And all smalle drynckys they wyll forsake,  
And drynke wyne of the best,

Good gosyp.

Some be at the taverne onys in the weke,  
And some be there every day eke,  
And ellse ther hartes will be seke,  
And gyffe her hosbondys ewyll reste,

Good gosyp. 60

When they had dronke and mad them glad,  
And they schuld rekyn theyn they sad,  
Call they tavernere anone they bade,  
That we were lyghtly hens,

Good gosyp.

I swere be god and by seynt Jayme,  
I wold notte that oure syre at home,  
[Shold wyt] that we had this game,  
Notte for fourty pens,

Good gosyp. 70

Gadyr the scote and lette us wend,  
 And lette us goo home by lurcas ende,  
 For dred we mete note with owre frend  
 Or that we come home,

Good gosyp.

When they had there countes caste,  
 Everyche of hem spend six pens at the last,  
 Alas, cothe Scyscely, I am agaste,  
 We schall be schent evrychone,

Good gosyp.

80

Fro the taverne be they all goone,  
 And everyche of hem schewythe her wysdom,  
 And there sche tellythe her husbond anone,  
 Shee had been at the chyrche,

Gode gosyp.

Off her werke she takythe no kepe,  
 Sche muste as for anowe go slepe,  
 And ells for ' angeyr ' wyll sche wepe,  
 She may no werkes wurche,

Good gosyp.

90

Off her slepe when sche dothe wake,  
 Faste in hey then gan sche arake,  
 And cawthe her serwantes abowte the bake,  
 Yff to here they outhe had sayd,

Good gosyp.

Off this proses I make an end  
 Becawse I will have women to be my firend,  
 Of there dewosyon they wold send  
 A peny for to drynke at the end,

Gode gosyp.

100

### XIII.

#### WOLCUM YOL.

##### A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

From the Sloane MS. No. 2593.

WOLCUM yol, thu mery man,  
 In worchepe of this holy day.

Wolcum be thu, hevene kyng,  
 Wolcum, born in on morwenyng,  
 Wolcum for hom we xal syng,  
 Wolcum yol.

Wolcum be ye Stefne and Jon,  
 Wolcum Innocentes everychon,  
 Wolcum Thomas martyr on,  
 Wolcum yol. 10

Wolcum be ye, good neue yere,  
 Wolcum twelthe-day, bothe infer,  
 Wolcum seyntes lef and der,  
 Wolcum yol.

Wolcum be ye Candylmesse,  
Wolcum be ye qwyn of blys,  
Wolcum bothe to mor and lesse,  
Wolcum yol.

Wolcum be ye that arn her,  
Wolcum alle and mak good cher, 20  
Wolcum alle another yer,  
Wolcum yol.

## XIV.

## A CAROL FOR SAINT STEPHENS DAY.

From the same MS.

SEYNT Stevene was a clerk  
In kyng Herowdes halle,  
And servyd him of bred and cloth,  
As ever kyng befallē.

Stevyn out of kechon cam,  
Wyth boris hed on honde,  
He saw a sterr was fayr and bryght  
Over Bedlem stonde.

He kyst adoun the bores hed,  
And went into the halle: 10  
“ I forsake the, kyng ‘ Herowde,’  
And thi werkes alle.

I forsak the, kyng ' Herowde, '

And thi werkes alle :

Ther is a chyld, in Bedlem born,

Is beter than we alle."

" Quhat eylyt the, Stevene?

Quhat is the befalle?

Lakkyt the eyther mete or drynk

In kyng Herowdes halle?"

20

" Lakit me neyther mete ne drynk

In kyng Herowdes halle :

Ther is a chyld, in Bedlem born,

Is beter than we alle."

" Quhat eylyt the, Stevyn, art thu wod?

Or thu gynnyst to brede?

Lakkyt the eythar gold or fe,

Or ony ryche wede?"

" Lakyt ' me ' neyther gold ne fe,

Ne non ryche wede ;

30

Ther is a chyld, in Bedlem born,

Xal helpyn us at our nede."

" That is al so soth, Stevyn,

Al so soth, i wys,

As this capon crowe xal

That lyth her in myn dych."

That word was not so sone seyd,

That word in that halle,

The capon crew, *Christus natus est!*

Among the lordes alle.

40

“ Rysyt up, myn turmentowres

Be to and al be on,

And ledyt Stevyn out of this town,

And stonyt hym wyth ston.”

Tokyn ‘ hem ’ Stevene,

And stonyd hym in the way :

And therfor is his evyn

On Crystes owyn day.

## XV.

### A CAROL FOR SAINT EDMUNDS DAY.

From the same MS.

A NEWE song i wil begynne,

Of kyng Edmund that was so fre,

How he deyid withoute synne,

And bow[n]dyn his body was to a tre.

Wyth arwys scharpe they gunne hym prykke,

For non rewthe wold they lete,

As dropys of reyn they comyn thikke,

And every arwe with other gan mete.

And his hed also thei of smette,

Among the breres thei it kest,

A wolf it kept witoutyn lette,  
A blynd man fond it at the last.

Prey we to that worthi kyng  
That sufferid ded this same day,  
He saf us, bothe eld and yying,  
And scheld us fro the fendes fray.

## XVI.

## THE RECOLLECTIONS OF CHATELAIN.

——— extracted from the “Faictz et dictz de feu maistre Jehan Molinet [chanoine de Valenciennes,]” Paris, 1531, folio; under the title of “Recollecion des merueilleuses advenues en nostre temps, par tres-elegant orateur messire George ‘Chastellain.’”

QUI veult ouyr nouvelles  
Estranges à compter,  
Je sçay les nompareilles  
Que homme[ne] sçauroit chanter,  
Et toutes advenues  
Depuis long-temps en ça;  
Je les ay retenues,  
Et sçay comment il va.

Les unes sont piteuses,  
Et pour gens esbahir;  
Et les autres doubteuses,  
De meschêf advenir;

Les tierces sont estranges,  
Et passent sens humain,  
Aucunes en louenges,  
Autres par autre main.

En France la très-belle,  
Fleur de crestienté,  
Je veiz une pucelle  
Sourdre en auctorité, 20  
Qui fit lever le siège  
D'Orleans, en ses mains ;  
Puis le roy par prodiège  
Mena sacrer à Reims.

Saincte fut aorée  
Par les oeuvres que fist ;  
Mais puis fut rencontrée  
Et prise sans prouffit,  
Arse à Rouen en cendre,  
Au grant dur des François, 30  
Donnant depuis entendre  
Son revivre autres fois.

J'ay veu ung petit moysne  
En Romme dominer,  
Et en très grant ensoigne  
Le pape gouverner :  
Dont depuis l'aventure  
Fut d'estre escartellé,  
A honte et à laidure  
Comme traistre appellé. 40



J'ay vu ung ypocrite,  
Pour le monde prescher,  
Soy-disant carmelite,  
Et fol soy avancer  
De dire messe sainte,  
Sans de prestrise adveu ;  
Laquelle chose atteinte  
Fut condamné en feu.

Depuis veiz en Escosse  
Le roy ' Jacques' meurdrir, 50  
D'espée et de talloce,  
Et luy convint souffrir  
Et prendre en patience  
A sa noble moullier,  
La royne, qui en ce  
Prist peine à se venger.

J'ay un duc de Savoye  
Veu pape devenir,  
Ce qui fut hors de voye 60  
Pour à salut venir ;  
Si en vint dure playe  
En l'esglise de dieu,  
Mais il en reçeut paye  
A Ripaille son lieu.

J'ay veu à la grant Romme  
Meurdrir ung cardinal,

Par ung faulx mauvais homme,  
Son barbier desloyal :  
Gisant en lit paisible,  
Querant sa coyeté, 70  
Dont en tourment horrible  
Il fut exécuté.

J'ay puis veu sourdre en France,  
Par grant dérision,  
La racine et la branche  
De toute abusion,  
Chef de l'orgueil du monde,  
Et de lubricité ;  
Femme où tel mal habonde  
Rend povre utilité. 80

Puis ay veu, par mistère  
Monter ung argentier,  
Le plus grant de la terre,  
Marchant et financier,  
Que depuis la fortune  
Veiz mourir en exil,  
Après fraudes mainte une  
Faicte au roy par cas vil.

J'ay veu par excellence  
Ung jeune de vingtz ans, 90  
Avoir toute sciënce  
Et les degrés montans,  
Soy vantant sçavoir dire  
Ce qu'oncques fut escript,

Par seulle foiz le lire,  
Comme ung jeune ' antecrist. '

Par fortune senestre,  
Veiz à l'oeil vivement  
Le grand duc de Glocestre  
Meurdrir piteusement ; 100  
En vin plain une cuve  
Failloit qu'estranglé fust,  
Cuidant par celle estruve  
Que la mort n'y parust.

Ung Gilles de Bretagne,  
Nepveu au roy Charlon,  
Veiz je, par mode estrange,  
Estrangler en prison  
Par l'adveu de son frère,  
Dont cité devant dieu, 110  
Mourut de mort amère  
Tout soubdain comme sieu.

D'Espaigne ung connestable  
Haultainnement regnant,  
Grant maistre redoubtable  
De Saint-Jacques le grant,  
D'or riche oultre mesure,  
Celluy veiz-je mourir  
De mort confuse et dure,  
Ce fist son demerir. 120

Le trésor de Venise,  
Où si grant apporta,

Veiz-jè embler par l'emprise  
D'ung Grec, qui l'emporta ;  
Depuis ung sien compère  
Fist accusation,  
Dont dommaige grant ere  
De pendre ung tel larron.

Depuis en ung province  
Trouvay ung accuseur, 130  
Qui me disoit que ung prince  
Coucha avec sa seur,  
Soubz une faulse bulle,  
Cuidant dispense avoir,  
Dont honneur le reculle  
Et non qu'a bon debvoir.

J'ay veu Millan conquerre  
Par ung povre routier,  
Et plus los y acquerre,  
Qu'ung roy vray héritier ; 140  
Se luy en est bien deue  
La gloire de l'arroy,  
Car sa vertu congneue  
Vault couronne de roy.

J'ay veu de trois centaines  
Vielle possession,  
Exposer d'Acquitaine  
Angloise nation,  
Et Bordeaulx et Bayonne  
Prise du roy François 150

Louenge à la couronne  
 Qui fist sy hault exploix.

J'ay veu la Normandie,  
 Et la noble Rouen,  
 Submise à la ' maistrie '  
 Du roy et de son ban,  
 Monstrant là ses banières  
 Sur ' les ' vielz ennemys,  
 Les quelz par armes fières  
 Vainqueurs il a remys.

160

J'ay veu ung hault emprendre  
 Pour advenir grans maulx,  
 De tuer et de pendre,  
 Beaucoup de cardinaulx,  
 Et du pape ainsy faire,  
 Se dieu n'y eust pourveu,  
 Estienne de Procaire  
 A Romme en fut pendu.

J'ay veu grand' invaincue,  
 Subjuguer à mes yeulx,  
 D'ung prince soubz la nue  
 Le plus victorieux,  
 Et d'espée mortoire  
 Vaincre ses habitans,  
 Dont cas de telle gloire  
 Ne fut passé mil ans.

170

J'ay veux extrême chose,  
Chevalier soubz trente ans  
Combatre en lice close  
Vingt-deux nobles gens, 180  
Par tant de foyz diverses,  
Comme il y a de noms,  
Sans foulle et sans traverse,  
Ce qu'oncques ne fist homs.

La cité Constantine  
Depuis veiz envahir  
De la gent Sarrazine,  
Qui la vindrent saisir,  
Et la teste coppèrent  
Au vieillard empereur, 190  
Sans ce que ailleurs monstrèrent  
Mainte aultre grant horreur.

J'ay veu une Lucrece  
En Romme dominer,  
De Naples, non de Grèce,  
Pour le pape honnorer,  
Aller au devant d'elle  
Cardinaulx et prelatz,  
Et sy n'estoit que ancelle  
Du roy, pour son soulas. 200

J'ay veu roy de Honguerie  
Faire preparement  
De haulte drurie,  
Très glorieusement,

Qui attendoit la chère  
Du nuptial atour ;  
Trouvé fut mort en bière,  
Ne sçayt-on par quel tour ?

Luy mort, prit la couronne  
Le filz d'ung compaignon, 210  
Vertueuse personne,  
Et de très grant renom ;  
Ainsi royal ' racine  
Prist là son dernier plong,  
Et la basse origine  
Monta en royal tronc.

J'ay veu l'aisné de France  
Fuytif de son sourgeon,  
Venir prendre umbroiance  
Soubz le duc Bourguignon, 220  
Et le mettre en couronne  
Non guères biens venu ;  
Dieu congnoist en son throsne  
S'il l'a bien recongneu.

J'ay veu peuple confondre,  
Et royaulme troubler,  
Chasteaulx et villes fondre,  
Et citez abismer,  
Craventer les églises,  
Fendans toutes parmy, 230  
En Naploises pourprises,  
Ce fist ce grant ay my.

J'ay veu descendre en France  
Anglois encontre Anglès,  
Par contrainte et puissance,  
Pour contendre au *possès*,  
Pour Calès et pour Guines,  
Ce fut tout cest esmeu ;  
Ce sont estranges signes,  
Le cas bien entendu.

240

Passant par Engleterre  
Je veiz en grant tourment,  
Les seigneurs de la terre  
S'entretuer forment,  
Avec ung tel déluge,  
Qui cueurs esbahissoit,  
Qu' à peine y eut réfuge  
Où mort n'apparoissoit.

Ung nouveau roy créèrent,  
Par despiteux vouloir,  
Le vieil en deboutèrent,  
Et son légitime hoir,  
Qui fuytyf alla prendre  
D'Escosse le garand,  
De tous siècles le mendre,  
Et le plus tollérant.

250

J'ay veu en grant fortune  
Une des fleurs de lis  
Tenir en prison brune,  
En très povres delictz,

260



Privé de seigneurie  
Et de royal honneur,  
Dont la gloire périe  
Est en sa prime fleur.

De Cypre la couronne  
Ay je veu emprunter  
Au chef de Babilone,  
Pour le roy en jecter ;  
Bastard est et d'esglise  
Celluy qui le maintient, 270  
Et n'a compte à reprise,  
Ny à mal qui en vient.

La royne veiz descendre  
Dedans le marin cours,  
Par ung ardant contendre  
Vers France pour secours,  
Qui depuis fut pillée,  
Et mis au sacqueman,  
Par pillars de Gallée  
Du port Venician. 280

J'ay veu de deux royaulmes  
Deux roys contemporains,  
Confesser en leur âmes  
Haulx motz et souverains,  
De tenir leur couronne,  
Et leur pourpre vestu,  
D'une seulle personne,  
Le grant duc de Vertu.

J'ay ung roy de Cecille  
Veu devenir berger, 290  
Et la femme gentille  
De ce propre mestier,  
Portant la pennetière,  
La houlette et chapeau,  
Logeant sur la bruyère,  
Auprès de leur troppeau.

J'ay veu de Georgie  
Et du hault orient,  
De Perse et d'Arménie,  
Diverse estrange gent, 300  
Mesme d' ung infidelle  
Transmettre au roy Charlon,  
Pour luy donner querelle  
Contra le Turc felon.

Le hault duc de Bourgoigne  
Fort bien le recoeillit,  
Dont l'oeuvre assez tesmoigne  
Quel honneur il leur fist.  
L'honneur fut si profonde  
Et de si haultain faict, 310  
Que jusques au bout du monde  
La mémoire s'en fait.

J'ay veu deux ' fois ' commettes  
Manifester au ciel,  
Et d'estranges planettes  
Plus amères que fiel,

Dont les fins non congneues  
Sont d'esbahissement,  
Et de non advenues  
N'est nul vray jugement. 320

J'ay veu chose inhumaine  
Et cruelle, en la foy,  
Tuer à force pleine  
Gens d'église à desroy ;  
La cité de Mayence  
En est tournée en feu  
Et a si greuve oultrance,  
Que oncques tel mal ne fu.

O ! hault duc, plein de gloire  
Et vous, son noble filz ! 330  
Ceste brefve mémoire,  
De tant de divers dis,  
Ay fait en voz louanges,  
D'ung cueur non vermolut ;  
Il plaise au roy des ' anges '  
Qu'il vous tourne à salut.

J'ay veu dure vieillesse,  
Qui me vint tourmenter,  
Se fault que je délaisse  
L'escripre et le dicter, 340  
En rime telle quelle,  
Puisque je vois mourant ;  
MOLINET, mon sequelle,  
Fera le demourant.

TRANSLATION, BY SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART\*.

HE that will hear of marvels strange  
As story e'er enroll'd,  
Of me shall learn such matchless change  
As ne'er in song was told.  
Each wondrous hap since first my eyes  
The living light did view,  
From memory's faithful treasures  
I know to tell it true.

And some are piteous all to know,  
And draw the listeners tears ;  
And some that augur future woe,  
Impress with boding fears ;  
Of some the dark mysterious maze  
Exceeds our human skill ;  
And some record the heros praise,  
And some the felons ill.

\* The present editor had the honour of being originally engaged by his relation and friend to render this rude chronicle into English rhyme; a task which he willingly resigned to abler hands. The version here given was not however found amongst Mr. Ritsons manuscripts after his death, though undertaken at his request, but has been since obligingly communicated by the author.

All in fair France, that lovely land,  
The flower of Christentie,  
I saw lead on an armed band  
A maid of low degree ; 20  
I saw her sweep the siege away,  
Which girt fair Orleans round ;  
By her in Rheims' cathedral grey  
I saw her monarch crown'd.

I saw her as a saint adored,  
Who broke her countrys chain ;  
Yet, changeful fortune of the sword !  
At length I saw her ta'en.  
Mourn, Gallia, mourn ! from Rouens walls  
Her death-smoke blots the skies ; 30  
Yet, when again her country calls,  
The martyred maid shall rise.

And next I saw a petty friar  
Assume the sacred sway,  
And dictate to our holy sire,  
And bid the church obey.  
The saucy priest, his power down-borne,  
Incurr'd a traitors doom ;  
His loathsome corpse in quarters shorn  
Defiled the streets of Rome. 40

I saw a feigned Carmelite  
Roam through the land to preach ;  
And there the frantic hypocrite  
Foul heresy did teach ;

Unlicensed by the priestly name,  
The holy mass he sung ;  
For which upon a pile of flame  
Convicted he was flung.

Even in fair Scotlands kingly hall  
I saw her royal lord, 50  
The gallant Stuart, butcher'd, fall,  
By halberd and by sword.  
Vainly his lovely consort strove  
To ward their traiterous blows ;  
Yet well, though late, her injured love  
Wreaked vengeance on his foes.

I saw proud Savoy strive to seize,  
With ill-considered aim,  
The Roman pontiffs holy keys  
And triple diadem. 60  
Irregular ambitions wiles  
Dealt holy church a wound ;  
For which, long after, at Repailles,  
The duke his guerdon found.

At Rome I saw an ancient, grave,  
And pious cardinal  
Murder'd by a domestic slave,  
Within his palace hall.  
Him on his peaceful couch, at noon,  
The faithless ruffian slew ; 70  
For which in many a torment soon  
He paid the vengeance due.

'Midst hoots of shame I saw, in France,  
With boughs in triumph borne,  
The root of all abuse advance,  
The nations plague and scorn ;  
A female fiend, whose pride and lust  
Exceed all earthly measure ;  
From such a stem could spring, I trust,  
Small profit and small pleasure. 80

And next I saw, by secret means,  
A money-broker rise ;  
In trade and lucre sordid scenes  
Was none so wondrous wise ;  
I saw him too in exile die,  
His fortune chang'd and gone,  
Because full often fraudfully  
His craft had robb'd the throne.

A youth of twenty years, no more,  
A wondrous sight to see, 90  
I saw attain each varied lore,  
And win each learn'd degree.  
Whate'er his eye had once perused  
His tongue could say again ;  
But the young antichrist abused  
His gifts in science vain.

Then saw I well duke Glo'ster reel,  
And hurled from on high,  
Crush'd beneath fortunes restless wheel,  
By felon murder die. 100

Immersed within the luscious tun  
The villains choak'd his breath,  
That wine quaff'd on till life was gone,  
Might drown the sense of death.

I saw the nephew of king Charles,  
Sir Giles of Britany,  
Spite of his birth from ancient earls,  
A strangled captive die.  
Such was his cruel brothers doom,  
Who cited from on high, 110  
By ways as wondrous, to the tomb  
Was brought as suddenly.

Grand master of saint James's knights  
I saw triumphant reign  
Alvarez, in his haughty might,  
High constable of Spain ;  
Not all the barons hoarded wealth,  
Not all his power and state,  
Could shield him, when crept on by stealth  
His dark and doubtful fate. 120

I saw the wealth which Venice piles  
In piles, where long it lay,  
By a shrewd Grecians crafty wiles  
Bereft and borne away ;  
Doom'd I saw the thief, detected  
By his comrades treachery,  
On a gibbet high erected,  
Far too mild a death to die.



A distant province next I saw,  
Where stern accusers said 130  
How that their prince, 'gainst natures law,  
Defiled his sisters bed ;  
In vain a forged bull he pleads,  
To screen a crime so foul,  
For honour spurns his vicious deeds,  
And conscience wrings his soul.

I saw a poor adventurers prize  
Lie conquer'd Milan fair ;  
More honour gain'd his high emprise  
Than if the rightful heir. 140  
To the bold knight is justly due  
Such tribute of renown ;  
His valour, known the nations through,  
Might grace a kingly crown.

I saw the English race expell'd  
From fruitful Aquitaine,  
Which, for three hundred years, they held  
Their ancient rich domain ;  
And Bayonne fair and Bordeaux, now,  
The king of France has won : 150  
Praise to the monarchs laurell'd brow  
By whom such deeds are done.

Eke have I seen fair Normandy  
To France's crown restored ;  
And Rouens turrets blaze on high  
The banners of her lord ;

Against the ancient enemy  
Defiance now they wave:  
Such are the fruits of victory  
By France's conquering glaive. 160

I saw devised in Roman walls  
A plot of horror dread,  
To murder holy cardinals,  
And seize the churches head ;  
But god, who made his church his care,  
Soon quell'd the enemy ;  
And daring Stephen de Procaire  
Did on the gallows die.

Old Ghent, invincible esteem'd,  
I saw it storm'd and won 170  
By one, the most victorious deem'd  
Beneath the rolling sun.  
The town was given to the flame,  
The people to the sword ;  
No deed of such deserved fame  
Shall ages ten afford.

I saw within a listed field  
A noble youth contend  
'Gainst twenty-two, with spear and shield,  
To vanquish or defend. 180  
So many noble knights were there,  
So many faiths they bore ;  
A field so strange, and fought so fair,  
Shall ne'er be heard of more.

I saw the seat of Constantine  
Storm'd by a heathen host ;  
Destroy'd, alas ! her ancient line,  
Her ancient honours lost.  
The aged emperor of Greece  
The caitiff miscreants slew ; 190  
But let the tale of horror cease,  
Nor vain regrets renew.

And I have seen a fair Lucrece  
Unbounded homage claim ;  
Of Naples she, and not of Greece,  
And least of Roman fame.  
Proud priests and prelates, many a one,  
Came bending to her knee ;  
Yet but a rampant courtezan,  
To speak the sooth, was she. 200

I saw the king of Hungary  
His marriage feast prepare,  
And celebrate his nuptials high,  
With princely pomp and care.  
The wedding cheer was richly dight,  
The bridal couch was spread ;  
But on that couch lay stretch'd at night  
The royal bridegroom dead.

And after him I saw arise  
A wandering soldiers son ; 210  
By feats of worth and bold emprise  
The kingdom he has won.

Thus fail'd the ancient royal root,  
Its branches shrunk and gone,  
And thus a foreign lowly shoot  
Was grafted on the throne.

The first of France's royal line  
I saw his kindred flee,  
And shelter seek beneath the vine  
Of ducal Burgundy ; 220  
A royal crown, back'd by his aid,  
Unhappily he won ;  
But god be judge how he repaid  
The mighty service done.

On Naples' fair and fertile coast  
I saw the firm earth rend,  
Towns, castles, cities, sunk and lost  
Through the dark gulph descend.  
The column'd churches rock'd and reel'd,  
The air with flames was red, 230  
A trembling people pray'd and kneel'd,  
For earthly hope was fled.

I saw even in the land of France  
Full many an English lord  
'Gainst English bosoms couch the lance,  
And wield the civil sword ;  
For Calais and for Guines they fought :  
Such discord dire and strange  
Within a hostile land, methought,  
Must bode some wondrous change. 240

I turn'd my eyes to Englands soil,  
'Twas slaughter over all ;  
In mutual fight and wild turmoil  
I saw her mightiest fall.  
To tell how wide the whirlwind reign'd  
Would chill your soul with fears ;  
No spot in all the land remain'd  
Undrench'd by blood and tears.

In high despiteous wilful mood,  
Another king they chose ; 250  
Their aged monarch, mild and good,  
Took refuge with his foes.  
To Scotlands kind, though hostile, coast  
With his young heir he came ;  
Scotland that can for ages boast  
Her hospitable fame.

A royal fleur-de-lis of France  
I saw in dungeon thrown ;  
By fickle fate and fell mischance  
His honours past and gone. 260  
His princely state and seignorie  
Were reft before the time ;  
Of France the royal fleur-de-lis  
Has perish'd ere the prime.

I saw the crown of Cyprus' isle  
To a proud soldan lent,  
Of Babylon the tyrant vile,  
Her king to exile sent ;

Of holy church a bastard bold,  
All reckless of the end, 270  
I saw him the foul deed uphold,  
Nor care for foe nor friend.

The queen of Cyprus next I saw  
Through ocean plow her way ;  
From France some succours meet to draw  
To fence the christian fay.  
But still her evil fates pursue,  
From watery Venice came,  
Of loose corsairs a lawless crew,  
Who robb'd the royal dame. 280

Two monarchs whom two kingdoms own  
I saw high worth avow,  
And swear before one power alone  
Their royalty should bow.  
They own'd one master, and no more,  
For him to wield the sword,  
Of him to hold their crowns they swore,  
Fair Virtues sovereign lord.

Sicilias monarch have I seen  
Assume the shepherd swain, 290  
And tending, with his lovely queen,  
Their sheep upon the plain.  
The shepherds hat, the shepherds hook,  
The shepherds cloak they wear,  
And rest at eve beside the brook  
Amid their fleecy care.

And stranger men of eastern lands,  
From climes remote, I saw,  
From Georgian hills and Persian sands,  
And old Armenia ; 300  
Both christian chiefs, and heathen too  
Who Mahounds maxims hold,  
Against the tyrant Turk did sue  
For aid to Charles the Bold.

Of Burgundy the noble duke  
Received them wondrous well,  
And honour'd them, as word and look,  
But best his actions, tell.  
For them he did such actions high,  
And honour so profound, 310  
The memory shall never die,  
Till the last trumpet sound.

And I have seen strange signs in heaven  
Of wondrous blazing stars,  
Whose fiery trains have signal given  
Of bitter plagues and wars.  
To seek what evils they portend  
In vain we may explore ;  
Enough for us to wait the end,  
And trembling to adore. 320

And have I seen a savage scene  
In christendom display'd ;  
For holy churchmen have I seen  
Fall by the bloody blade.

In fair Mayence, to flames a prey,  
Such outrage foul was done  
As never, till that direful day,  
Was witness'd by the sun.

High duke, in whom we glory all,  
And thou, his son so bold, 330  
Accept this brief memorial  
Of deeds which I have told.  
Framed for your lesson and your praise,  
In heart devoid of flaw,  
Heaven grant ye from my humble lays  
The wholesome moral draw.

And now chill age, I see, is nigh,  
To freeze my future time,  
And check my hand and dim my eye,  
For record or for rhyme; 340  
Last, last of all, stern death I see  
To shut the scene draw near—  
The sequel, MOLINET, from thee  
The listening world shall hear.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

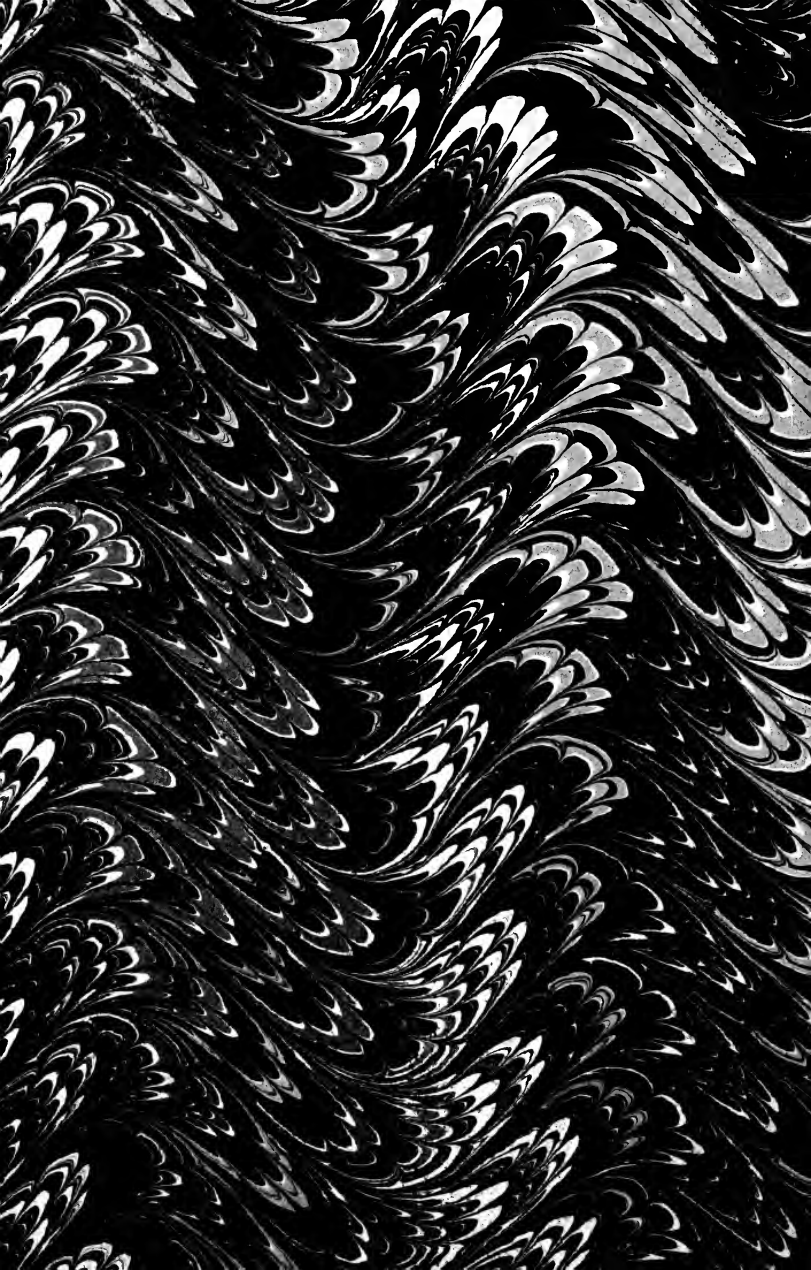


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